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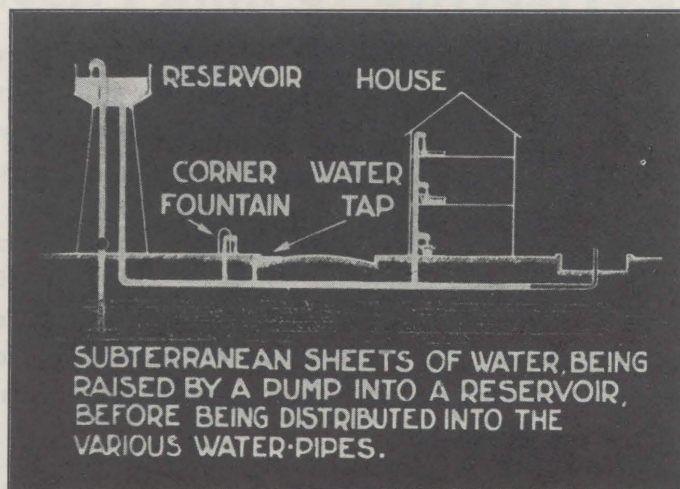
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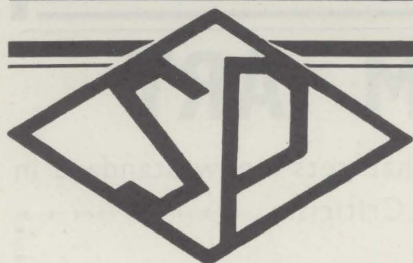
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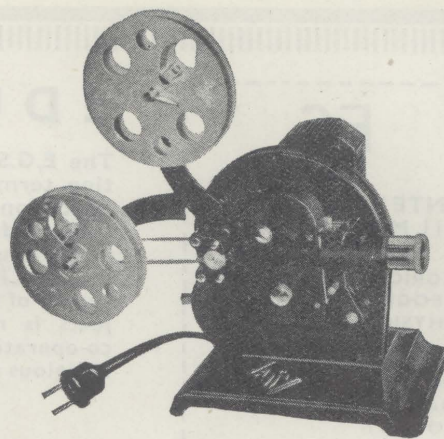
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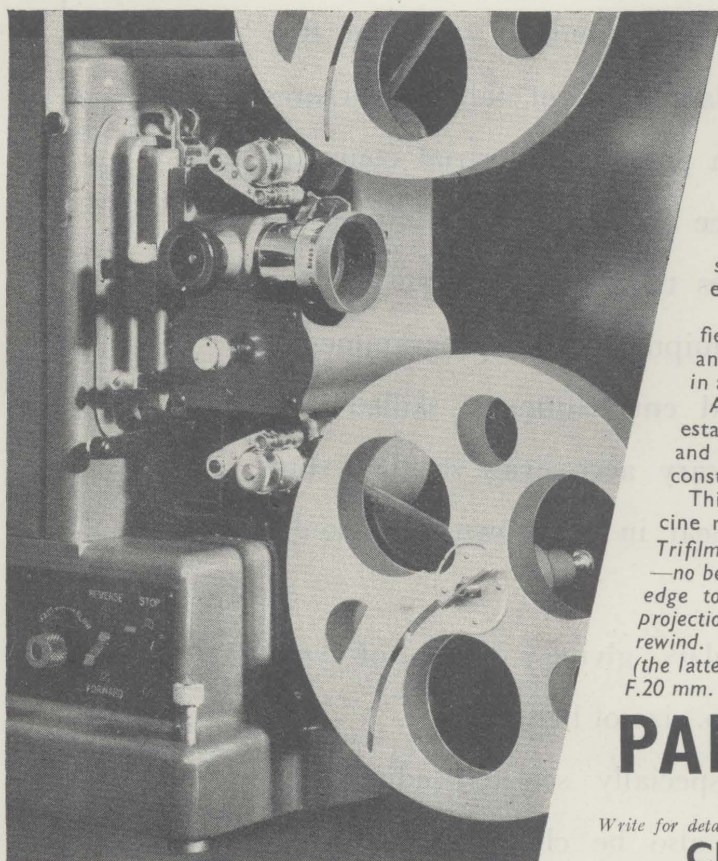
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SIGHT AND SOUND

PUBLISHED BY THE BRITISH FILM INSTITUTE

VOLUME 5, No. 19

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THREE YEARS' WORK

THE British Film Institute has published its third Annual Report. It records much steady and valuable day to day work. One is left with the feeling that if there were no Film Institute a large number of people would be at a loss where to turn for essential information and service.

The membership rises steadily, though it is by no means yet as large as it should and will be. Its composition is interesting, for as well as home members, it includes many Dominions and Colonial official representatives: medical officers, administrators, Directors of Education. The value of the cinema as a medium of education is now realised throughout the Empire wherever the administration is exercising guardianship over backward races.

In the Institute the Colonial administrator

has found a useful centre to which to address his requests for information and advice, or when on leave to come and consult personally. The growing interest from overseas has inspired the Dominions, India, and Colonies Panel throughout its year's work, for it became clear that before those individuals who were anxious to use educational films could be materially assisted from this country, much work remained to be done. The Panel has reported on the ways in which this end can be encompassed. A pamphlet is in preparation for circulation to all parts of the Empire, and another pamphlet will deal with special technical problems that arise where such modern conveniences as mains current do not exist.

The closer contact established between the Local Education Authorities and their Officers

and the Institute has been a feature of the year. Deputations at which the objects of the Institute were explained by the Governors were received by the County Councils Association, the Association of Education Committees, the L.C.C., and the Association of Directors and Secretaries for Education. At the same time the Association of Education Committees' Executive Committee has sent to all Committees in membership of the A.E.C. a resolution commending the work of the Institute. The value of the Institute as a centre of information has been borne out by the fact that a large proportion of the 1,800 requests for information during the year have come from educational sources. The experiments that are now being conducted in many areas, the reports of experiments that have been issued, the increasing sales of classroom projectors, the growing supply of educational films, are all symptomatic that the idea of using the film as a visual aid has taken deep root in the consciousness of those responsible for the direction and administration of our educational system.

Perhaps the best instance there has yet been of fruitful co-operation between Education and the Film Trade is the series of films on Physical Training, completed during the year, which have had a wide success in all forms of exhibition both public and private. The production of the films was directed throughout by the Physical Education Committee.

The Medical Panel's effort is worthy of special note. It has surveyed and catalogued the existing supply of medical films recording processes in medicine and surgery and has discovered incidentally a number of valuable films whose existence was unknown outside the hospital or laboratory in which they were made.

The Monthly Film Bulletin has contained reviews of 828 films during the year. Of these 152 were of educational films. The reviews were prepared by members of the special viewing committees consisting of teachers and specialists. 604 entertainment films have been covered through the instrumentality of the Entertainment Panel. The reviews are noteworthy for the indications that are given as to the suitability of the film for adults, adolescents, and family audiences, with special reference to the films which are specifically suitable for children.

How far the influence of the Bulletin extends it is impossible to say. Several branches of the Film Institute publish their own monthly list for the guidance of their members. In one area at least the effect of a large membership influenced by the notes they receive has had a noticeable effect on the type and standard of films shown in that area. Other recipients of the periodical are key people in the life of the community and the ultimate effect of the guidance given to such authoritative folk cannot be over-estimated. Fundamentally the Institute seeks to make available to the discriminating public the information necessary to enable each individual to make his own selection for himself. There will not be better films until there is a more critical public opinion that knows what is good entertainment and what is bad, and demands to be satisfied.

In this account of the year's work, two of the most interesting items on the credit side of the sheet have been left till last. The first is that in July of this year a Film School was held in London in which for the teaching profession's benefit the theoretical side was blended with the practical and actual instruction given in the use of projectors. The other is the development of the National Film Library. The idea of the preservation of worth-while films seems to have struck the public imagination for the response to the Library's appeals has been remarkably good. Even its present collection, though full of gaps, is an epitome of the main currents that have gone to make the film of to-day.

The Institute was not created to behave like a "nova" in the heavens, and blaze up furiously for a few months before passing out of the range of any but the strongest telescopes. It must be content to shine more modestly. By co-ordination of effort on the one hand and by encouragement of new movements on the other, it seeks to harmonise the conflicting interests and desires of trade, teacher and public. Quietly therefore let it go ahead on the path it has laid down for itself, and some day in retrospect the historians of the future will know where to lay the credit for the development of the cinema in Great Britain as a means of entertainment and instruction.



Françoise Rosay and Alerme in LA KERMESE HEROIQUE

(By courtesy of Studio One)

NEWS OF THE QUARTER

Big Deals

AS the last issue of SIGHT AND SOUND went to press, late in July, the Big Deal between the Gaumont British Picture Corporation, Loews Inc. (of which Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer is a subsidiary company), and 20th Century Fox was officially in the air, although the exact details of the Deal and its implications were not clear and the agreement had still to be approved by the boards of directors of the three companies. On the financial side the Deal involved the formation of a new holding company for the control of the Gaumont British, in which 20th Century Fox and Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer would between them hold a large part of the shares. It was announced that a substantial block of the shares in the new company would be offered to the British public and that the Ostrers would remain in control of the company so that control of Gaumont British would remain in England. On the organisation side it was announced that Gaumont British pictures would be distributed in America by M.G.M. and 20th Century Fox; that the three

companies would combine their selling organisations in Great Britain and that Gaumont British would produce films in Great Britain for M.G.M. and 20th Century Fox. To many people it appeared that the Deal would result in Gaumont British passing under American control, and many questions were asked in Parliament. The Government replied that it was awaiting full details of the transaction.

Early in October new rumours started about the future of Gaumont British, but this time it was Mr. John Maxwell, and the Associated British Picture Corporation, who were doing the buying. Official statements were issued on October 12th. The agreement provided for the acquisition by Associated British of the Ostrer's holdings in the Metropolis and Bradford Trust which holds the controlling block of shares in Gaumont British Picture Corporation. This agreement involved the purchase of 250,000 "B" shares which do not carry votes and 5,100 "A" shares which constitute a majority of the 10,000 voting shares. The purchase of the "B"

shares has been effected, but it appears that so long as 20th Century Fox hold at least 2,451 of its 4,900 "A" voting shares the Ostrers cannot sell or transfer any part of their holding of "A" shares without the consent of 20th Century Fox. At present negotiations between Mr. John Maxwell, of Associated British, and Mr. Sidney Kent, of 20th Century Fox, regarding this part of the Deal have been abandoned. In the meanwhile Mr. Maxwell has been elected to the Board of Directors of Gaumont British and the administrative control of Gaumont British is stated to be exactly as it was before the Deal was initiated.

Mr. Maxwell's statement set the tone for the press comments on the Deal when he stated:—

"In making this Agreement I have been mainly influenced by the desire to prevent the Gaumont-British Company passing under foreign control, and this Agreement secures that. I took the view that, if the arrangement originally contemplated with the American companies had been carried through, it would have meant the passing under foreign control of a huge block of the British cinema and film industry. If that had happened there is no doubt that the other large American companies, in order to preserve their own interests, would have endeavoured to make similar arrangements, indeed, were already trying to do so, with the result that in a short time the bulk of the cinemas in this country, and certainly most of the best ones, would have passed under foreign control. Such a situation would have been intolerable in any country, and in my view a humiliation that a great nation such as ours would have been compelled to stop, if necessary by governmental and legislative measures."

If the ultimate result of the agreement is to give Mr. Maxwell control of Gaumont British, he will then control, in all, over 600 cinemas throughout Great Britain, two of the largest distributing companies, the production policies of two of the largest British producing companies, and, presumably, various subsidiary companies such as G-B Instructional and G.B. Equipments. It remains to be seen whether a merger of this magnitude, be it under American or British control, is in the best interests of the cinema industry as a whole or of the general public.

G. B.'s Policy

Referring to the Big Deal at the annual general meeting of the Gaumont British Picture Corporation, held on November 2nd, Mr. Mark Ostrer stated that in the negotiations with Fox and M.G.M. "the question of the possibility of foreign control was not completely covered and they were reluctantly compelled to abandon the proposal." Dealing with the accounts, which showed a net profit of £715,514, as compared with £720,483 for 1934-35, and the decision to place £200,000 to a special reserve, and to pay no dividend to shareholders, Mr. Ostrer stated that it had been proved impossible to recover from the home market alone the full cost of quality pictures. "We are, therefore, faced," he continued, "with the choice of abandoning our efforts in the American market in favour of a programme of cheaper films for the home market or of abandoning film production altogether." Considerable criticism of the report and accounts was made by shareholders and the meeting was finally adjourned pending the

production of a consolidated statement of accounts and balance-sheet.

On October 30th considerable reductions in Gaumont-British staff and production schedules had been announced by Mr. Mark Ostrer. It is understood that between 35 and 40 members of the staff have been given notice, reducing production units from six to two, and that ten or twelve films only will be produced during the coming year, as compared with sixteen for the past year.

Control Board for Cinema Industry ?

Sir Arnold Wilson, a member of the Departmental Committee on Cinematograph Films, on the occasion of Mr. Rowson's appearance before the Committee, put forward a number of suggestions relating to the establishment and working of a British Cinema Industry Control Board organised on the lines of the Milk Marketing Board and the Electricity Commissioners, consisting of men "who are genuinely anxious to give effect to the declared policy of the Government." Such a Board might, among other things, regulate the amount of capital coming into the industry, enable the industry to improve its administration, and promote the establishment of technical schools for the industry. Sir Arnold, in a series of questions to Mr. John Grierson, developed the scope of such a Board, should it be established, to include certain powers at present exercised by the Board of Trade, "some powers such as those which are at present unofficially exercised by the trade such as that of censorship," and the maintenance of a public relations officer.

The second volume of Minutes of Evidence taken before the Departmental Committee on Cinematograph Films may now be obtained from the Stationery Office (price 7s. 6d.).

Insurance Companies and Film Production

Mr. Maxwell, appearing, on behalf of the Kinetograph Renters' Society, before the Departmental Committee, drew attention to the activities of insurance companies in financing the production of films. He asserted that "it is a regular thing for a man who wants to make a picture, to form a £100 company for the purpose, to get a firm of insurance brokers to fix up a loan for him" by issuing Guarantee Policies to banks who give overdrafts. "The Bank takes a mortgage on the picture and collects its proceeds and when in a year or two the loss (as it usually is) is ascertained, the Underwriter pays up the shortage to the Bank." It was suggested that such activities resulting in large sums of money being made available "to irresponsible and often inexperienced people who often spend it wastefully" is having a bad effect on the cinema industry. Mr. Maxwell would seem to include in wasteful expenditure the "extortionate wages throughout the whole of the industry" such as, for example, are now demanded by and paid to cameramen and electricians.

Quota

Further suggestions relating to quota have won been placed before the Departmental Committee. The K.R.S. submitted that the present obligations

imposed on foreign distributors are so heavy as to be practically impossible of effective performance and result in the procuring of a large number of cheap, poor films which bring discredit to the British film production industry. It suggested that an obligation to produce five or six feature films a year instead of fifteen or eighteen, as at present, would more effectively serve the desired purpose, provided that there were safeguards as to cost to ensure their being effective and creditable British films. Mr. Maxwell maintained that it was unreasonable to expect good quality films from American distributors if they had to meet a 20 per cent. quota or higher. The main obstacle was, in his opinion and experience, the absence in Great Britain of sufficient creative directors and scenarists. Mr. Eckman of M.G.M. denied the suggestion that American distributors had attempted by means of quota quickies to discredit British film production or that British films had been screened at the Empire while the theatre was being cleaned. Mr. Graham outlined the attempts made by Paramount to produce films in Great Britain before there were any quota obligations.

Mr. Rowson and the Cinematograph Films Advisory Committee to the Board of Trade in their memoranda suggested a cost qualification for British films and reductions of quota obligations. Mr. Rowson suggested a scale rising from 15 to 25 per cent. for renters and from 12½ to 25 per cent. for exhibitors; the Advisory Committee suggested 20 per cent. for renters, 15 per cent. for exhibitors. Mr. Rowson suggested easing of quota for shorts and the Advisory Committee suggested that quota should apply to long films only. Mr. John Grierson and Mr. Bruce Woolfe gave evidence in support of the inclusion for quota of certain types of short films at present excluded. Mr. Ivor Montagu, of the Film Society, and Mr. J. S. Fairfax-Jones, of Denning Films, gave evidence on behalf of companies, cinemas, and film societies which specialise in the renting and exhibition of continental films.

Markets for Films

Mr. Rowson's memorandum presented to the Departmental Committee contains a mass of information and statistics on the comparative sizes of the American and British home markets and the effect of these on such matters as the number of films produced, the expenditure on individual films, and capital invested in the two industries. This memorandum, together with Mr. Rowson's paper presented to the Royal Statistical Society, were described by Sir Arnold Wilson as containing "more information than any publication that I know, whether official or unofficial," an opinion which will find general endorsement. The fundamental problem, according to Mr. Rowson, in view of these figures, is to facilitate access for British films into the American market. He recalled the offer made in 1926, the year before the passing of the Cinematograph Films Act, 1927, by the British trade for a reciprocity agreement whereby American companies would undertake to

release in America one British film for every 15 or 20 American films released in Great Britain. This offer came to nothing, but Mr. Rowson now suggests that in any future legislation the Board of Trade should have power to suspend renters' quota liability in cases where distribution of British films in a foreign country is effected.

Mr. Rowson's comparative figures, for 1934, included the following:—

	U.S.A.	Great Britain
Population aged 15 and over (millions)	89.7	34.3
Admissions per annum (millions)	3,700	963
Cinemas	14,501	4,305
Seats in cinemas ('000) ...	10,000	3,872
Population aged 15 and over per cinema	6,200	8,000
Population, aged 15 and over per seat	9	9

At the end of 1934 there were 3,640 operative cinemas in the British Empire outside Great Britain.

Figures recently issued by the U.S.A. Department of Commerce corroborate Mr. Rowson's figures and give further evidence of the size of the world cinema industry and of America's share in it. At the beginning of 1936 the distribution of operative cinemas throughout the world was as follows:—U.S.A., 15,378; Europe (including Great Britain), 60,000, of which only 27,956 were wired for sound films; Latin America, 3,338; Far East, 3,712; Canada, 833; Africa and Near East, 480. The approximate weekly attendance at cinemas throughout the world is estimated at 220 millions. The average weekly attendance for U.S.A. is estimated at 80 millions and for Great Britain 19½ millions. It is estimated that at the beginning of 1936 world capital investment in the cinema industry was £530,000,000, of which American investment accounted for £400,000,000.

New Governors for B.F.I.

At the third Annual General Meeting of the British Film Institute three new Governors were elected to represent public interests in place of the three retiring Governors who did not seek re-election. The Hon. Eleanor Plumer, is a member of the Cinematograph Films Advisory Committee to the Board of Trade and of the Departmental Committee on the Cinematograph Films Act, 1927, and has been actively connected with the work of the Institute since its inception. Professor W. Lyon Blease is Queen Victoria Professor of Law and Public Orator at Liverpool University, and is an active member of the Council of the Merseyside Film Institute Society which, with a membership of over 1,000, is one of the largest film societies in the country. Captain Sir William Brass, M.P., has represented the Clitheroe Division of Lancashire since 1922. He has been Parliamentary Private Secretary to the Postmaster General, the Minister of Health, and the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and acted in a similar capacity to the Colonial Secretary on his Empire tour in 1927-28. He is a keen amateur cinematographer.

IS IT CRITICISM ?

By Graham Greene

Film Critic of *The Spectator*

FILM criticism, more than any other form of criticism except perhaps that of the novel, is a compromise. The critic, as much as the film, is supposed to entertain, and the great public is not interested in technicalities. The reader expects a series of dogmatic statements: he is satisfied, like any member of the Book Society, with being told what is good and what is bad. If he finds himself often enough in agreement with the critic, he is content. It never occurs to him to ask why the critic thought this film good and that film bad, any more than it occurs to him to question his own taste. The fictional film is more or less stabilised at the level of middle-class taste.

One need not deny to either books or films of popular middle-class entertainment a useful social service, as long as it is recognised that social service has nothing to do with the art of cinema or the art of fiction. What I object to is the idea that it is the critic's business to assist films to fulfil a social function. The critic's business should be confined to the art.

Catching the eye

It is this which presents serious difficulties, for a critic concerned with an art needs at least two things: material for his analysis, for comparison and instruction, and a mind which, however sympathetic, is not prone to quick enthusiasms. But, to take the first difficulty, what in the cinema is the critic to write about? He is lucky if two or three films in the year can be treated with respect, and if week after week he produces an analysis of the latest popular film, showing how the script-writer, the director and the camera man have failed, he will soon lose his readers and afterwards his job. He has got to entertain, and most film critics find the easiest way to entertain is "to write big". One leading reviewer adopts a very masculine, plain man manner, which is as uncritical and has the same effect as the fulsomeness of more hack reviewers; it catches the eye easily. *Their* praise is usually unequalled by the official publicity writers. Indeed I once knew a daily journalist who never troubled to write his own copy, but handed in the publicity man's "blurb" with a few adjectives knocked out. The public eye accustomed to the weekly "masterpiece" and the daily "tragedy," demands from these journalists Poignant Dramas and Tragedies of Frustrated Love rather than unenthusiastic and accurate estimates. A Hungarian producer at Denham, turning out a number of commercial films of rather low technical value, becomes—in a recent magazine—a Man of Destiny.

Reviewing of this kind contributes nothing to the cinema. The reviewer is simply adding to the atmosphere of graft, vague rhetoric, paid publicity, the general air of Big unscrupulous Business. He is not regarded by his employers as a critic so much as a reporter. One day he is required to write a fulsome interview with a visiting film star at the Savoy, the next to criticise a film in which she appears. The double role is too much for the reviewer, and his criticism reads like an extended interview, gossiping little paragraphs about the stars, an inaccurate sketch of the story, no mention of the director unless he is, like Capra or Clair, world-famous, and no mention at all of the film as a film, that is to say, sequences of photographs arranged in a certain way to get a certain effect.

For some months I, too, received from a patient American company about two telegrams a week addressed to my home inviting me at great length (they usually ran to forty words) to be present next day at the Savoy or the Carlton when a film personality, sometimes of remarkable obscurity, would "hold court". This was the invariable phrase. There would be, the telegrams usually added refreshments.

Refreshing the critics

Refreshments: it is a key word to the murky business, to the world in which a new critic finds himself. Even publishers, with their cocktail parties, have not developed the racket to this pitch. It is still possible to review books, among books, in quiet, and I believe dramatic critics are not yet given free drinks at the bar between acts or offered, before the curtain rises, a glass of sherry and a cigarette (one film company even goes as far as champagne). It is assumed that the film critic is invariably thirsty and alcoholic even at the oddest hours. Nowhere else, except on the West Coast of Africa, have I been expected to start drinking by 10.30 in the morning, when the taste of the morning marmalade is still on the tongue. Sometimes the dubious hospitality extends to a lunch at the Carlton.

The film companies, of course, are not bribing the critics. No one is going to be bribed with a glass of sherry and a cigarette. The motive is less obvious and more kindly. The daily press is to a great extent controlled by advertisers. The film critics are not free to damn a bad film. Almost the only papers where you can find uncontrolled criticism are the periodicals: *The New Statesman*, *The Spectator*, *The London Mercury*, and *The Listener*. The glasses of sherry, so I believe, are charitably intended

to make it easier for the so-called critic to tap out his fore-ordained notice: it would be a grim business otherwise.

The same motive perhaps lies behind the Gala performances: a Gala performance is usually allotted to an expensive but bad film: *Moscow Nights*, *The Dark Angel*, the two worst films of 1935, both had this curious setting of blue lights, squealing peeresses, policemen to keep back a crowd which wouldn't have assembled without the policemen, and strained attempt to make a bad film, if it can't be entertainment, at any rate something, a Show, a social occasion. It is in this atmosphere that, if ever there is a Shakespeare of the films, he will have to get a hearing. His films will not be damned, they will be praised, praised as highly and in the same terms as *The Dark Angel*. And it is in this atmosphere, too, that a Coleridge of the films would have to work. Indeed, when once his little vice became widely known, his kindly host would see that he was served with his individual opium pill instead of the glass of sherry.

Popular art and the middle classes

It is not that one wishes the cinema to be precious, eclectic, unpopular. The novel has long ceased to make any effort at being a really popular art: the novels of Mr. Priestley or Mr. Brett Young represent the people about as much as do the prosperous suburbs of Balham and Streatham. I doubt if we have had any popular art in England since the Shakespearean theatre, and I welcome the chance the cinema offers. Millions go to the cinema, but do they really get what *they* want or do they get what the middle class public wants?—the cinema of escape. The thousands who come down to Wembley in charabancs from the north with favours in their

caps don't want to escape. They want something as simple and exciting as a cup-tie, just as the Elizabethan public wanted something as brutal and exciting as what went on in the bear-pit. *The Texas Rangers* is nearer to popular art than *Anna Karenina*. I admire a film like *Song of Ceylon* more perhaps than anything else I have yet seen on the screen, but I would rather see the public shouting and hissing in the sixpenny seats. Instead—I look at my paper this week: *The Great Ziegfeld*, *Sins of Man*, *Follow Your Heart*, *East Meets West*, *The Singing Kid*.

Criticism by satire

What, to return to my earlier question, is the critic to write about? Almost the only approach possible at the present stage for a critic who is writing for readers uninterested in technical detail is the satirical. This is to make a flank attack upon the reader, to persuade him to laugh at personalities, stories, ideas, methods, he has previously taken for granted. We need to be rude, rude even to our fellow reviewers, but not in the plain downright way, which may help to kill a particular picture, but leaves its kind untouched. The cinema needs to be purged with laughter, and the critics, too (critics who can write: "By sheer diligence and enthusiasm the cinema, which 25 years ago was producing such morsels as *What Drink Did* has now arrived at the point when the Queen, the Prince of Wales, and the President of the United States, are all prepared to patronise its shows within a fortnight"). Indeed, I am not sure whether our fellow critics are not more important subjects for our satire than the cinema itself, for they are doing as much as any Korda or Sam Goldwyn to maintain the popular middle-class Book Society *status quo*.



From *THE TEXAS RANGERS*

(Paramount)

THIS PUBLICITY BUSINESS

By Francis Meynell, G.B. Publicity Chief

ADVERTISING (which to-day is estimated to cost in newspapers alone over £35,000,000 a year in this country) is, or should be, the spreading of news. Its economic function is to make grand-scale manufacture or production possible by ensuring a wide consumption. Many, indeed most, machine processes—including film production—require this wide “spread.” You cannot have general consumption without advertising, or news-spreading, unless you abandon freedom of choice. If there were only one soap available, your only choice would be to go unwashed or to use it. If there were only one general release you would have to lump it—or go to the dogs. The cost of advertising would have been saved, but selection, variety, freedom of choice would have perished. May it perish in the mere thought!

But clearly there would be an enormous reduction of advertising. Many of the things most widely advertised (like patent medicines) are not newsworthy—not worthy and not *news*. A vast deal of competitive advertising is unnecessary, because the varieties it distinguishes to the public do not represent significant variations. They are virtually the same things with different labels. And the advertising of these unreal differences adds fantastically to consumer cost. I myself was once engaged in advertising a very “successful” product the advertising of which cost twice as much as the article itself. It could be bought unbranded at the chemist’s at about one-sixth of the branded price.

Spreading news

You may say, cynically, that there is this same fundamental sameness in pictures; but however hackneyed a plot, however automatic a dialogue, however conventional a treatment, there is never identity of effect and of “entertainment value.” In the new world (supposing for a happy moment that fascists and wars do not arrest the development of our civilisation) there will be much more leisure. More leisure must mean more entertainment. More entertainment must mean more variety of the means of entertainment, and more choice within those means. More choice involves more news of alternatives. And that means advertising—the honest, the surviving side of advertising. So what?

In a world that is not Brave (in that sense) nor New, it is still a sound policy to consider the lasting basis of our trade. What is fit for future survival is likely to be fit for present use. But it must take account of the needs and foibles and even the follies of the day as well.

In developing a policy for Gaumont-British advertising I have tried to bear this in mind. The

first emphasis is on *news*—to give a picture of the picture, verbally and graphically. This may seem a grandiloquent expression of a usual practice. But the practice is not in fact usual in advertising. What an advertising “expert” is apt to do is to ask himself what the public would like to have in the commodity he is offering, and then to say (true or false) by every art of persuasion that it has that quality. “Play down X in your advertising” I have heard him say. “He may be the star of the picture, but it’s an old contract and he isn’t so hot at the box office.” But X is, for better or worse, the picture. . . . Or in a recent instance, a picture was described as “The greatest success the West End has ever known.” It was thought that West End success was all the picture needed to command big bookings in the provinces. The truth was that it was a notorious flop in London: but that did not deter the advertiser. There is the story—it may not be true, but let it stand as a symbol—that an ink-maker, failing to obtain the desired true black in his product, made a great market for it by advertising its defect, its “blue-black,” as a virtue.

Piling it on

The “excessive” style (super, colossal, magnificent, epoch-making) of advertising films is a joke to everyone—except the trade. It derives from the circus style of advertising once appropriate to three-day stands in “tank” towns in America. An advance agent had to pile it on and be off to his next assignment. His claims could be fantastic because the picture had come and gone before they could be exposed. And he was appealing to an uncritical and unsophisticated public. Because there is no simple test of an advertisement’s pulling power (as there is, for example with trailers, which have been laughed by audiences out of their old excesses into a comparative sobriety) this style has survived in American advertising; and because the majority of “big” pictures are still American, and they arrive in this country complete with advertising campaigns, they have set a fashion or habit for the same sort of thing in England. Which is a bad business—and, as I believe, *bad* business.

Newspaper advertising of pictures is confined almost entirely to their West End showing. The pictures themselves become more and more sophisticated. Their public follows suit—taste changes and enlarges, people who three years ago would have thought Mr. Deeds crazily full of words now enjoy it, and a new and more intelligent public goes to the cinema. A picture public in the West End is the theatre public *plus*. To maintain the old

"excessive" style of advertising is plain nonsense. Those of us who realise this try, therefore, to do two things. First, to make our advertisements *informative* (which, of course, includes the subtle business of suggesting the atmosphere of the picture); and second, to make them *credible*.

This credibility business has two sub-divisions. First *self-praise* must be so rare, so modest, as to overcome the proper and inevitable reaction of cynicism. In advertising an important and intelligent picture lately I used the following words:

"Film producers have been accused of 'laying on the adjectives' about their pictures. We do not follow this plan. The descriptions below are not ours but the critics' own."

(I must duck from one aspect of this theme. The selection of these quoted phrases is not a wholly honest job even when there is a conscientious approach to it. Naturally, the praisey bits are chosen, the critical ignored. But the public must understand this—probably too well!)

But it isn't enough to eschew the widest and wildest words of self-praise. What needs to be done for effective salesmanship is to use the sort of words which average grown-ups of the theatre-going kind use among themselves. What Mrs. Smith says to Mrs. Jones is "That's a good picture. You'll

enjoy it. I did." She will not say "This colossal picture will entangle your heart-strings as it plumbs emotion to the deepest depths." Why should she believe it if you (already suspect as the advertiser) inflict this kind of rigmarole on her? I remember a Pears Soap advertisement which said "This is a *good* soap." It is the only soap advertisement I have by heart. The success of Mr. (Radio) Murphy, who now shares with George Washington the reputation for being the most truthful man in historic time, has proved the soundness of this attitude as salesmanship.

And it is more than direct salesmanship. It is the preservation unimpaired of whatever dignity and importance the screen rightfully possesses, which other methods destroy. Every advertisement of a picture is helping or hindering not merely that picture but the whole habit of picture-going. There is the individual picture; and there is the habit of "going to the pictures". Mr. Rowson's statistics prove that there is a vast public which has not yet got that habit. It has a "sales resistance," to use the appropriate jargon. You cannot blame the pictures themselves for this. True, their general level might be far higher; but there are enough hills and even mountains to please the most



(Above) 12 sheet poster designed by Char!



(Right) Faint colour and pencil sketch for a 6 sheet poster by Mariette Lydis

aspiring. The cinema is cheap, is comfortable and is accessible. What is the obstacle? One must blame the manner of its advertising.

Advertising, more than anything else, can help the formation of a picture-going habit where none exists, and can make the habit itself more generous where it already exists. I should myself prefer to see a co-operative "going to the pictures" campaign in place of a large amount of the individual picture advertising. Prefer it, I mean, from a business point of view; and prefer it also from what is called (by such as Rotarians) an "ethical" point of view; for there would, I think, be less over-selling of individual products, with all that is thereby involved of extravagant claim and violent display.

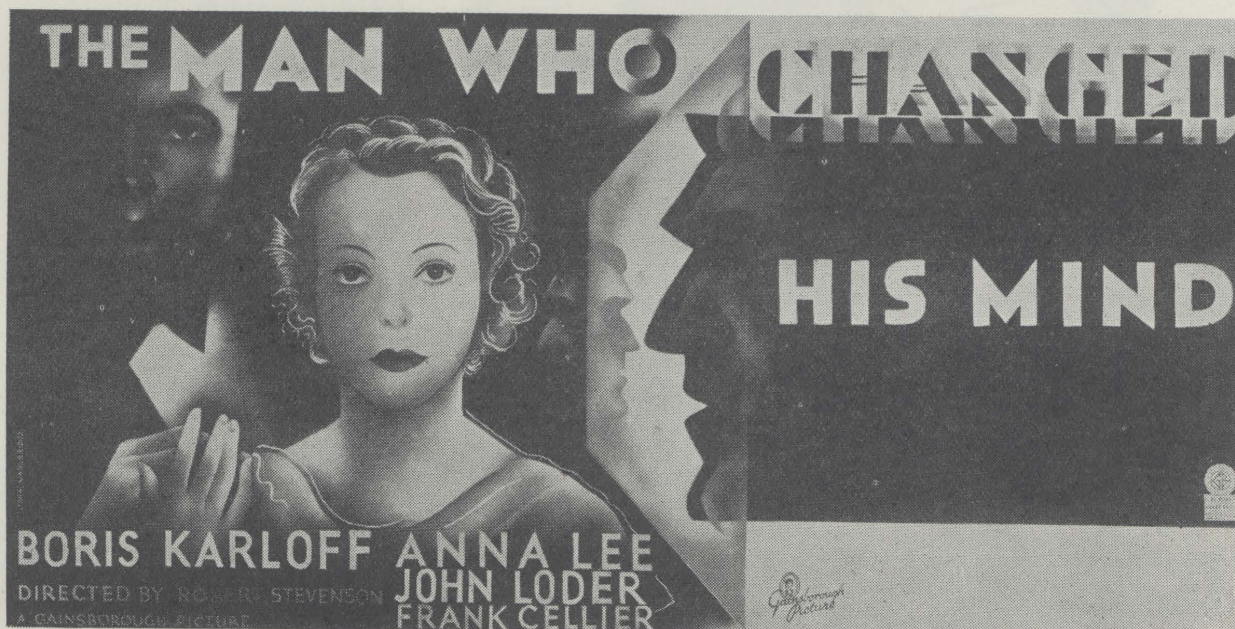
Good advertising

So we come to display. The thesis is much the same: visibility without undue exaggeration. It is hard enough to gain visibility without any "withouts." The spaces we can use are small, the papers which it is profitable or customary to use are poorly printed and overcrowded. Visibility by *difference* is the easiest formula at this moment; for most film displays are riots of types and tricks, with half-tones put through half-nelsons; and the better ordered, the quieter displays, if they are cunningly managed, can out-whisper their throaty shouts. But if film advertising becomes as orderly as most industrial advertising, and remains as overcrowded, it will be the high-powered types which will give the contrast and gain the visibility. That day is far distant. Although the standard is improving very much and very fast, salesmanship and the proprieties can still lie down together. There is a manifest opportunity for the use of better art-work, and more suitable techniques such as scraper-board. The harmony of types, and the value of white space ("paper is part of the picture") has been discovered by commercial advertisers' and will be discovered by film advertisers.

I cannot yet say the same of posters. I should like to look to the day when Gaumont British can have a show of its posters with a pride (and even a product) imitative of London Transport's. We have made a start towards this. *East Meets West* has some designs by Charl, *The Man Who Changed His Mind* has a 48-sheet by John Mansbridge. *It's Love Again* has a 6-sheet by Mariette Lydis, which I would put into competition with the best industrial posters. But these are admittedly exceptions.

One trouble is that these posters have to be regarded as saleable commodities. The exhibitors have to order and pay for them, and their taste has to be considered. Another, which limits the amount of money one can invest in design and printing, is that virtually all cinemas run two-feature programmes with film from different renters. Usually there is an "equal publicity" clause. So that bills for hoardings have to be hand-stencilled letterpress affairs giving a careful half to each item of the programme. Therefore pictorial posters survive scarcely anywhere except on the cinema's own premises, where bills of both subjects can be shown alongside each other. This limited circulation makes it hard to persuade the paymasters of a fundamental need: the spending of more money on the making of a poster. An average film-trade price is five guineas for the artist! A ten guinea fee is exciting and rare. The printer is held down in a similar way. Is it any wonder that most cinema posters look like the covers of the penny dreadfuls of my youth?

Commercial art in general has improved vastly in the last ten years. Patent medicine advertising (and not all of this) and cinema advertising (and not quite all of this) alone are outside the movement. The pictures we have to sell no longer are made for people of mental-age seven. Our methods of telling and selling should grow up, too.



48 sheet poster designed by John Mansbridge

Blocks lent by Gaumont British Publicity

PUPPETS ON PARADE

By Patricia Hutchins

THE puppet film is still one of the great unmapped continents of imaginative possibility on the screen. Until now we have only explored the margins of satire and fantasy. Experimenters have met with the difficulties of all pioneers, but as long as there are claims to be staked and potential goldfields to be discovered, patient and infinitely painstaking effort will continue. Those who survive prejudice or momentary success may bring more to the cinema than all the theorists put together.

The fairy tale, which had a definite oral function, lost by transmission into print, but film and the sound track may yet catch something of its essential character. Without a hankering after literary films, it must be admitted that Hans Anderson, Grim and a thousand unnamed storytellers were first-class scenarists in their way. They had an instinct for form and the gifts of conveying atmosphere, which civilisation so often rounds and smooths into ineffectiveness. Ask a peasant to tell a tale and he will live for its duration in its space and time; the conviction with which he visualises is incommunicable.

Pal in Holland

What has this to do with puppet films and 1936? Everything and nothing. Here is George Pal with his *Ether Ship* launched, and behind his name lies a list of films: *Midnight*, *The Revolution of the Bulb*, *The Magic Atlas*—and now the Horlick's *On Parade*. It is he who has made screen advertisement palatable, and the films have been well received. Reviews from London and the provinces show that in the exotic story of *Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves* his puppets have brought something new and amusing to a large and varied public. But in spite of beautiful colouring, it is reminiscent of the not quite successful firework which pops at the wrong moment and whose brightness fades rather thinly into air. Perhaps it is because at times the sound, and especially that of human voices, does much to give an impression of conflict between reality and fantasy, as do some of the almost stereoscopic sets which seem uncertain to which realm they belong. On seeing *The Magic Atlas* again, the beauty and sympathy of the colour gives even greater pleasure than before, but it cannot hide the bareness of construction as the pages turn and turn again, more persistently than Whittington and all his bells.

Pal is making another film for Philips Radio. It is called *Ether Symphony* this time, and in it glass is used for such unlikely things as clouds and pyramids. The improbable grows unhesitatingly from an improbable world, and the whole film

has more rhythm and unity of conception than the story of *Ali Baba*.

Ptushko in the U.S.S.R.

Ptushko's *The New Gulliver* brings other puppets to life, but puppets with a purpose going further than novelty or amusements. In an article written specially for the Summer 1935 Number of *Sight and Sound*, Ptushko explains the art of object multiplication "which gives dolls the opportunity to acquire all the shades of expression possible to the artist's palette." Petya, the Gulliver of the film, looks at the fairyland of modernised Lilliput with twentieth century eyes, and we recognise in the characters the heroes of the present day political arena—which is always comforting. "Here the satiric sting of Swift's masterly story is made to touch contemporary life."

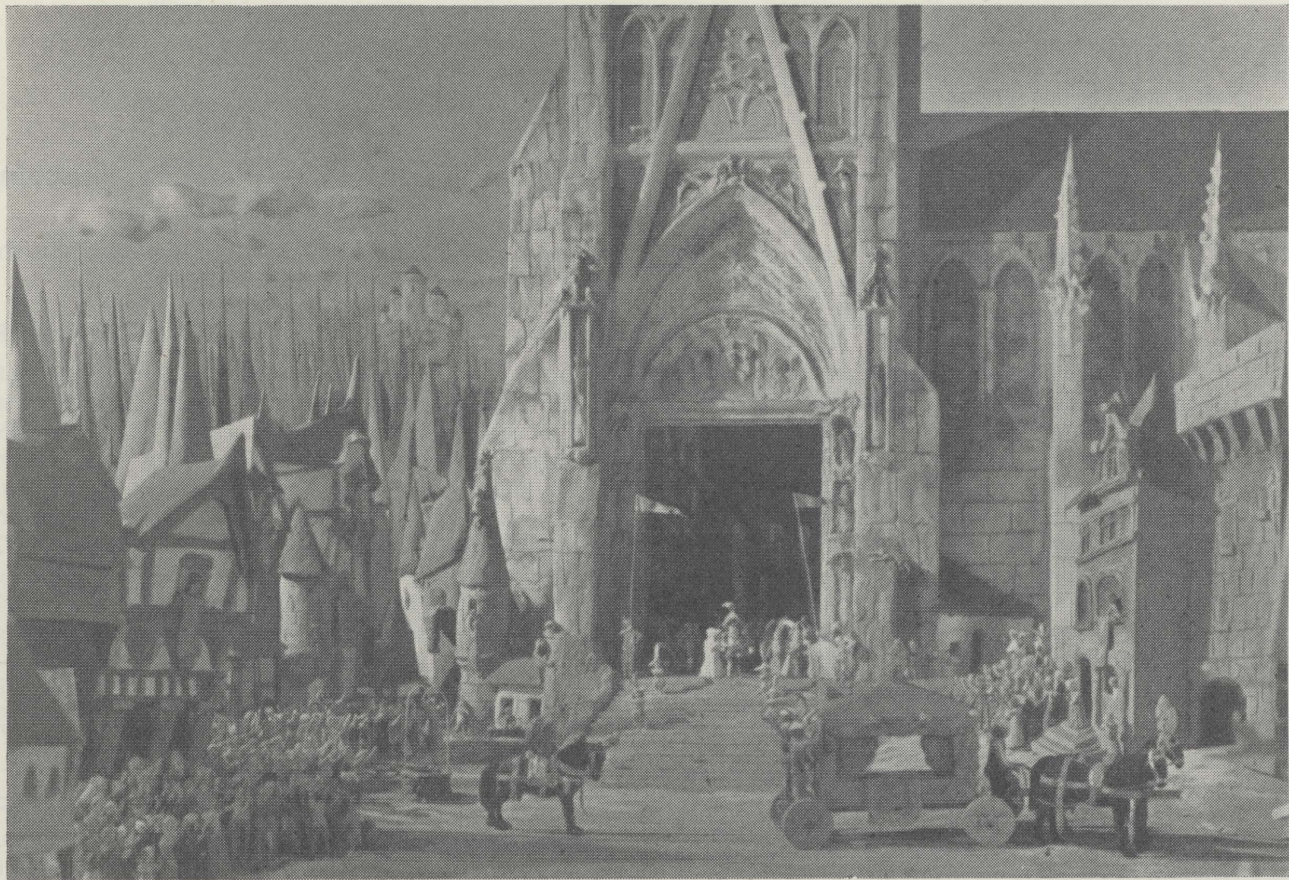
Starevitch in France

If we can think back nine years or so, over an endless cemetery of films, to Starevitch's *Magic Clock*, we find in it the delicate blending of real with unreal which gives to *The Mascot* and the *Ring-master* that sure quality of imaginative interpretation nearest to poetry. Here, in these films, is the simplicity of form, the inevitable climax and anticlimax of the fairy story, which makes Walt Disney look like an Oxo advertisement, and brings to a generation which has never been afraid in the dark, a rich sense of the macabre and the pathos of small things in a truculent and grown-up world.

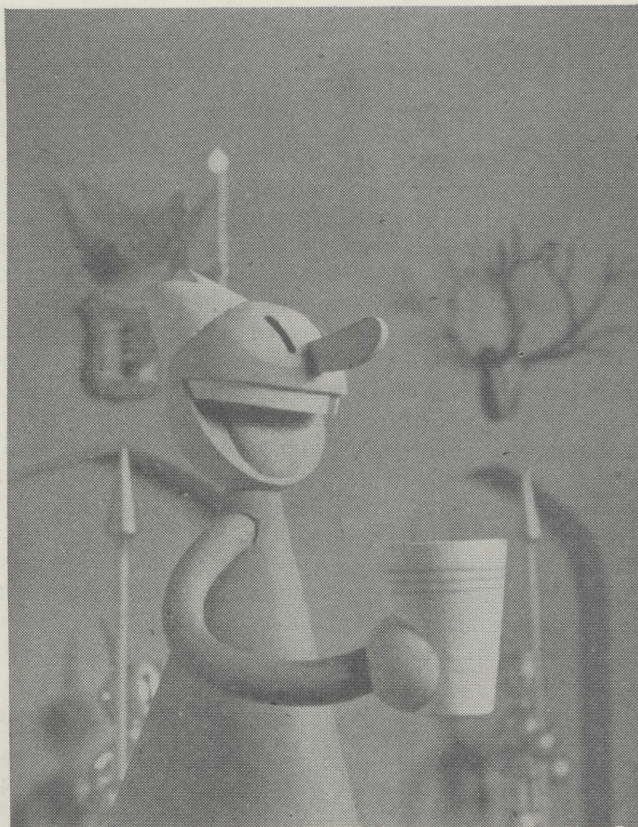
Three more recent Starevitch films, which have not yet been seen in England, continue the exploits of the dog "Duffy", his marriage, his honeymoon and his *Adventures in the Land of the Vampires*. It is interesting to see how in the meantime he has grown into a young blood with co-respondent shoes and a slightly arty disregard for his tie. His creator is nothing if not logical; in his next film *Duffy*, it appears, will cope with a large and unruly family. If you have not seen the predecessors to these films, you will find his antics amusing and marvel at the skilful mechanics behind them. Elaborate back-grounds have been made with artificial, but often decorative, effect. Starevitch seems to have become conscious of his adult public and what has been lost in sentiment has been made up for in sophistication.

The Brothers Diehl in Germany

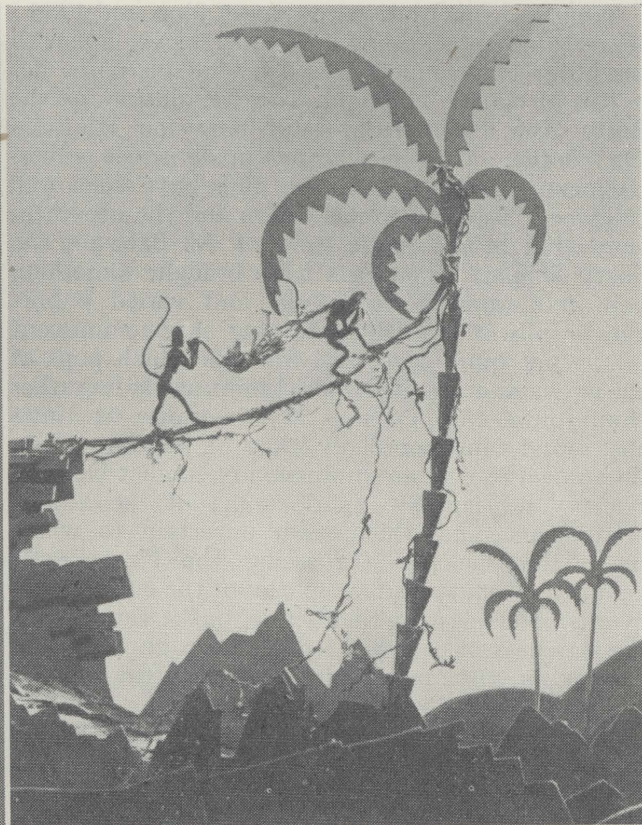
Another approach to the puppet film has been worked out with elaborate care by the brothers Diehl, whose fairy tales, some running into five reels, have met with success in Germany. The



BLUE BEARD'S MARRIAGE, a puppet film by René Bertrand



ON PARADE by George Pal



THE LAND OF THE VAMPIRES by Starevitch

actors, in spite of modelled faces and easily controlled limbs, are deliberately allowed to retain that detachment from reality, that likeness and unlikeness to human beings which has been the ageless fascination of the puppet play and the organ-grinder's monkey.

The Birth of the Robot, a puppet film in Gasparcolor, made for Shell-Mex, is more interesting for its colour than for its puppetry. Len Lye, forsaking for a while the abstractions of *Colour Box*, and Humphrey Jennings were responsible for the direction and animation; and John Banting and Alan Farmer for the design and construction of the models. The film has movement and novel effects—mainly of colour—and when the designs are clear-cut and simple it is grand to look at. The roundabout representation of the planets seems muddled and overloaded with detail, and the puppets, with the exception of the Robot himself, formless and dead.

Réné Bertrand in France

Among those who are experimenting on short films in France is René Bertrand, who is a sculptor turned cameraman, designer, and director of an animated sculpture film in Gasparcolor, based on the story of Blue Beard.

At six p.m., when metro and autobus were already crowded, work was just beginning when I called at M. Bertrand's studio in Montparnasse. Three children, between seven and eleven years old, were busy modelling the figures which move in a screen world of harmonious colour and proportion. Owing to the effect of warm weather on their specially-prepared material, it had been found necessary to work at night. With their small and skilful hands, they adapt an individual expression or movement between each frame. I was given to understand that the camera used had been specially made by Jean Painlevé and differs from those usually employed in colour cinematography.

The music, written by Maurice Jaubert, who has worked with Cavalcanti, Vigo, and Clair, is essentially

French in character, making full use of orchestra and chorus, and expressing a mood to which jazz has never been able to lend itself. 1,500 figures will have been made in the completed film of one reel (1,000 feet), and they vary in height from two to twenty inches. Many of the chief personages have to be modelled in different sizes, according to the proportions of the numerous sets. To give an idea of the labour involved in the shooting alone, it took three weeks to move Blue Beard about eight inches. Twenty frames a night is considered quite rapid progress.

"Because the film is made entirely in the same medium," M. Bertrand explained, "we get a unity of colour effect and avoid hardness of outline." He showed me a long street leading to a miniature Gothic cathedral eighteen feet away. It had been arranged in sections to permit tracking from the dim interior to the gesticulating crowd of over three hundred people at Blue Beard's last and most splendid marriage. From groups of onlookers to the houses, even to the carriage of the King himself, this brightly-coloured town was of the same clay-like substance. Later I saw spacious halls, mysterious dungeons and overflowing treasure chests worked in accurate detail down to the last link of a gold chain.

"... and the cost?" I queried.

Réné Bertrand lifted his hands. "There is no waste of stock, no retakes; we have planned score and scenarios to the last frame. For the moment it is an experiment; in the future it is for the great public. Perhaps we shall make new discoveries, form new theories on the use of colour, even on the three-dimensional film. . . in the meantime," he smiled, "we must work."

The children, who had watched me with silent curiosity, went back to their modelling.

"After all," the sculptor went on, "it is their film; for them the sets are real places and the models are living individuals long before they reach the screen."

As I left I wondered if, after all, there was not a chance for Scheherazade.

Royal Photographic Society Exhibition

The Royal Photographic Society will hold its annual Exhibition of Kinematography from Saturday, November 28th, to Saturday, December 5th, at 35, Russell Square, London, W.C.1. The Exhibition will be opened by the Hon. Anthony Asquith, on Saturday, November 28th, at 3.30. Features of the Exhibition will be displays of cinematograph apparatus and of stills illustrating chiefly educational and documentary films, lectures, and film shows on Tuesday and Friday evening, and on both Saturday afternoons. As in previous years a competition for sub-standard films has been held. Films could be submitted on any sub-standard stock, silent or sound, monochrome or colour by professionals and amateurs. Class I in the competition embraced any kind of film; Class II was limited to scientific films; Class III was limited to any type of film made by amateurs.

Venice Exhibition

British films received four awards at the Fourth International Festival of Cinema Art, held at Venice. Medals were awarded to *The Mine*, G.-B. Instructional's documentary film, directed by J. B. Holmes; and to *Scrooge* and *The Robber Symphony*. M. Greenbaum was awarded a cup for his camera-work in *Tudor Rose*. Germany obtained the premier award—the Mussolini Cup for the best foreign film—with *Der Kaiser von Kalifornien*. Other awards were as follows: Best director, Jacques Feyder, for *La Kermesse Heroique*; best acting, Paul Muni in *The Story of Louis Pasteur* and Annabella in *Veille D'Armes*. The cup for the best documentary film went to *Jugend Der Welt*, the film of the Olympic Winter Games, 1936, produced by the German State Propaganda Office. The judging committee consisted of 50 per cent. Italians and 50 per cent. foreigners.

BRITISH FILMS AND THE EMPIRE

By Winifred Holmes

AUSTRALIA, 1918. The War is over at last; a wave of relief and excitement spreading through all sections of the people; high wages; lavish spending—the boys are coming back, let's have a good time. The cinemas are packed out. Everybody goes, some families every night; mother, father, children, even babies. Pity those babies. No one will stay in to look after them, so out they're dragged, to lie uncomfortably on mother's lap for several hours in a stuffy smoky atmosphere, not appreciating Annette Kellerman in *The Daughter of the Gods* or the antics of Charlie Chaplin.

Now that they are seventeen or eighteen years old, have they still the cinema habit? One imagines so, since Australia has one of the largest cinema-going populations per head in the world. Theatre and music hall hardly count as popular entertainment—Australia is so far off that a season there is an extremely expensive proposition for a company. Bread-and-circuses are provided by the cinema, and Australia, being gay and pleasure-loving, take it in large doses.

The fact that American films were the only ones available for many years is all the more significant. It is impossible not to be influenced somehow by the screen's visual realism, and if one spends two or three hours at the cinema every other day—that influence must be a strong one.

Australian popular sentiment during the War years and for ten years after was undoubtedly pro-American. There was, of course, a firm basis of patriotism for the Old Country, but the ancient grudge against her methods of colonisation still rankled. Australia determined to develop on other lines—admiring and copying an older successful sister, rather than growing up like mother.

American films showed standards of living (falsely glamorous for the most part), sophistication, manners, dress, business up-and-coming-ness and democracy. There was a freedom from convention, a matey give and take spirit in them which fitted Australian character. The out-of-door hard-riding Westerns might almost have been made on a New South Wales or Queensland station, with slight differences of dress and accent.

In the last few years the position has changed. Americanised Australia is going British. Old ties of sentiment for England—never broken—have been strengthened. There is greater pride to-day in being a member of the Commonwealth of Nations—the Empire. British films are not only on the market, but competing in quality with Hollywood's best efforts. The new attitude of pro-Britishness demands them; the films themselves encourage the

new attitude. It is highly important that British films should be good advocates.

So strong is this sentiment that British films which, over here, are only mildly successful, run for months in Melbourne, Sydney, Perth, Adelaide, Hobart . . . and win "rave" notices in every paper. Australian renters who are fighting their powerful American rivals for the control of key cinemas, have in several cases declared an all-British policy, and crowd their houses. At present the market is fairly shared between them.

Australia has begun to produce for herself, and is vital enough to make films based on her own history, life and customs. The new Quota Act insists that renters shall acquire or produce a percentage of Australian made films, so the industry has every encouragement, and its development will be exciting to watch.

New Zealand

The market for short films is poor, as two feature programmes are everywhere the rule. In New Zealand this is reversed. British documentary and educational films have a greater chance of distribution than anywhere else in the Empire. New Zealand prefers the one feature programme, and always having been intensely patriotic towards the Empire, enjoys "Buying British".

American films do not seem to have influenced her life at all, except in superficial things. American cars, for instance, have an advantage over British for rough roads and rough usage. Also in matters of dress. New Zealand women, like Australians, are smart and trim, and a few years ago a dowdy woman used at once to be labelled "English"!

For a long time New Zealand has been crying out for British films, and especially for films which show England to advantage. Her complaint is that we are fast asleep over here. "Can't anyone wake up in Britain? How different is the response we get from America!" says a New Zealand paper.

The Australia-New Zealand British Film League makes it its aim "to encourage the exhibition of good quality Empire films only, including travel and educational films," and suggests that every foot of Empire film produced is worth a "pound a foot" to the Empire.

Things are looking better now in this respect. There are far more British films to import and the standard is higher; while English documentary and educational films are the best in the world. But it is an expensive business to import films as, although there is no duty at all, they have to be away from England for three to six months. Films



Burial on the Matopo Hills from RHODES OF AFRICA

(G.B.D.)

in New Zealand are taxed on their earning capacity.

The position is quite different in Canada. Proximity to the United States has meant sharing everything American as a matter of course. At first the cinema was surely an American industry, and American distributors opened up the Canadian field as they did their own. Now they have a virtual monopoly and British films creep in with difficulty. Perhaps one-fifth of the films released in a year are British.

Canada

Films have done a great deal to Americanise Canada and to sell U.S. methods and ideals. Canadians live at the same quick tempo, have very much the same temperament, loving direct action rather than slow expansion and explanation. Therefore the slick technique of American films appeals to them more than our slower ones. Talkies are largely responsible for the flat "a" and American twang which, except in British Columbia, where most people are English, has become almost universal during the last twenty years.

But though Canadians are American in temperament and exterior they are extremely British in sentiment. Canada is one of the most loyal of the Empire's citizens. She would welcome good British films—not ones with poor technique—of the historic or epic type. The stranglehold American companies

have acquired make this a far-off ideal. The only way to achieve it would be for England to make such superlatively good films that everyone would insist on seeing them!

Man of Aran was shown everywhere and praised more highly than any other film of its year; the Jubilee films were also a huge success. On the whole, however, English films have a poor reputation as, to comply with quota rules, American companies have hurriedly made "quickies" on Vancouver Island and elsewhere—hence erroneously giving British films a bad name.

Even more important from the Empire point of view would be to send first-rate British films to French Canada, where, to quote an eminent French-Canadian writer, "the majority of film-goers are woefully ignorant of English matters, and to whom the Empire means nothing—as they showed clearly in the War."

The National Film Society of Canada is working hard in the interests of British films in Canada. It is supported by the powerful organisation of the I.O.D.E., the Imperial Order of the Daughters of the Empire, which has branches in nearly every town and village all over the country. The Churches also give it their support, as they disapprove of much of the subject matter (gangsters, sex-drama, crime, etc.) and treatment of American films; the Canadian Legion and the Government Education Council work with it also.

Canada is, like Australia, just entering the production field herself, and has wisely chosen, in *The Barrier*, a national subject for her first picture. This is the building of Canada's great railway system from the earliest stages to the present time.

South Africa

South Africa is unique in that American companies have lost out to South African interests. The cinema industry is entirely in the hands of a South African, Schlesinger, who controls African Consolidated Theatres. This has benefited the Dominion as she has always been able to see the best films, irrespective of nationality or producing interests.

South Africa is isolated and isolationist towards the rest of the world. Content to be part of the Empire, she is more wrapped up in her internal politics and relationships than she is interested in the rest of the world—America and England not excepted. Her national life is characteristically her own—one cannot say that films have influenced her as they have decidedly influenced Australia and Canada.

The schools of the Union would benefit greatly if there were some means of distributing British educational films to them. They suffer from isolation, and are on the whole narrow in outlook and contain a stratum of racial feeling. Films would bring the rest of the world nearer and help to break down these barriers.

In India, again, the influence of American films has been negligible. The civilisation and outlook they reflect are too alien for the people of India to imitate. British films are more popular since

England and India understand each other better than do India and America.

India

During the last five years a flourishing native industry has sprung up which satisfies the entertainment demands of various groups—Hindu and Moslem, and the chief vernaculars. Influenced by Sanskrit drama, traditional popular morality plays, Shakespeare and western films, these Indian films hardly succeed as artistic works. But they have the virtue of being made by Indians for Indians, and natural ability and artistic perception should develop something more satisfactory and individual before long.

To conclude, it is essential for continued unity and goodwill within the Empire that more and better British films should be distributed everywhere, and that these films should add to England's prestige and show more of her ideals and epic qualities than before.

Britain is full of epic subjects ; of the past, such as *Rhodes of Africa*, and of the present, such as *Sanders of the River*, *Contact*, *Night Mail*. Many of our best subjects are made into films by the Americans, and slightly changed and de-nationalised in the process. We ourselves should have made *Mutiny on the Bounty*, *Bengal Lancer*, *Mary of Scotland*. Certainly it is time, as New Zealand suggests, that we wake up before it is too late ; otherwise, while we are still yawning and stretching after our long, self-satisfied sleep, the market and a *British Empire* may be lost to America.



Kay Francis as Florence Nightingale in *THE WHITE ANGEL*

(Warner)

RELIGION AND THE SCREEN

By Robert Herring, Film Critic of *The Manchester Guardian*

CENSORSHIP is an old horse to flog and is, perhaps, most usefully ignored. But the hold-up in this country, and the banning in Ontario, of *Green Pastures* and the allegations made in the *New York Times* by Bernard Shaw regarding the projected film of *St. Joan*, now reprinted in *The London Mercury*, may not be ignored. Even if the *Motion Picture Herald* is correct in describing Shaw's letter as "an amazing document comprising innumerable erroneous facts and fallacious conclusions," the fact remains that for some reason, Czinner's production of this film, with Bergner in her famous role as the maid, has been held up. One can only wonder what can be the reason for putting obstacles in the way of filming a play which, in one of the author's few sustained statements which are not exaggerated, has

"held the stage for eleven years throughout the civilised world with such general approval, and especially with such religious encouragement, that the possibility of a conflict with the censorships which now control the film would never have occurred to me."

With *Green Pastures* the case is clearer. In America, Marc Connelly's play was seen by two million people during its run of five years and Warner's film of it filled the largest cinema in the world—the Radio City Music Hall—for a month. But Ontario has banned it! The Premier of Ontario based his decision on his opinion that it is "an insult to the Christian church-going people," an opinion which it is impossible to appreciate quite apart from its reflection on the American people. Mrs. Plumptre, member of Toronto's Board of Aldermen, on the other hand, observed that "a reverent and thoughtful audience would see in it only a form of reverent expression, but an irreverent and thoughtless one could make it very obnoxious." This point of view one *can* appreciate, but does it not apply equally to church services? (Witness the temptation most of us suffered and to which some of us, especially if we were choirboys, yielded in our youth.) Such a theory, in practice, means giving more consideration to the thoughtless than to the thoughtful and, therefore, more encouragement to everyone to be thoughtless. In fact, we must all freeze to death rather than have fires at which fools may burn themselves. Or, one should do without heaven because those who can't get there go to hell. It is the materialist view of the universe. And that, and that alone, I make bold to declaim, is what is wrong with the cinema. However, to return to that later . . .

In England *Green Pastures* has been held up for six months before being passed by the British Board of Film Censors. One can only conjecture that the Board hesitated in this way because it was afraid that the film would give offence to religious

minded people. In the past it has taken exception to films on religious grounds because of "blasphemy and comic treatment of religious subjects" and because of "themes portraying the Hereafter and Spirit World." One can appreciate these grounds for exception but the latter would seem to be capable of such wide application as to exclude sincere as well as insincere treatment of a subject that is of universal interest. It is surely here that the churches should have made their position clear and not allowed themselves to appear to support the banning from the screen of religion and religious subjects as such, irrespective of the treatment given to them. Since the play *Green Pastures* was published in this country many people have had the opportunity of judging that it is a work of great reverence, simplicity, and sincerity. There may be some who cannot bring themselves to accept the friendly everyday terms in which the Negro thinks of the Deity as anything but "childish" or blasphemous. They are so used to the European form and ritual of a faith that reached us from the East that they cannot appreciate that the African's interpretation may be no less reverent, to himself real, and to all unprejudiced people, loving. This possible lack of perception the B.B.F.C. has now apparently decided is not to be taken as general and is not to be regarded as sufficient reason for preventing *Green Pastures* from being shown. If, therefore, it is to the B.B.F.C. that one feels grateful for this decision, it means that there is something wrong with authority that spends its time, no doubt estimably, "cleaning up" movies and preserving us from evil and yet cannot stir a benedictory finger when pictures of faith and pure feeling are made.

The Papal Encyclical

The authority which has lately had most effect on moving pictures is the Holy See. It is no secret that the "Purity Campaign" originated largely from Rome. The recent Papal Encyclical on motion pictures is primarily a message of congratulation on the results of the campaign. It also contains suggestions for future conduct.

Much of it, though mild, is impeccable. More men in high positions should publicly state that "the potent instrumentalities of publicity (such as the cinema) which might be of great advantage to learning and education . . . often unfortunately serve as an incentive to evil passions and are subordinated to sordid gain". No one can deny that those with power should make of the cinema (though the Pope does not add, of everything else) "a valuable auxiliary of instruction and education rather than of destruction and ruin of souls."

All this has been said before, of course. Indeed the Encyclical reads in these passages like well-

paraphrased quotations. But it is noticeable that their phrasing is less vigorous than that of the denunciatory passages. This may account for the contradictory interpretations which were placed on the Encyclical. We read, for example, that "the more marvellous the progress of the motion picture art and industry, the more pernicious and deadly has it shown itself to morality and to religion and even to the very decencies of human society".

Well, has it? The cinema, as a world-wide entertainment, embraces every known form of publishing and production; farce, *Folies Bergères*, shocker, Sunday scandal—as well as tragedy, idyll, domestic drama, and religious play. Let us grant that it is "unfortunate" that the first four exist. But even the Index has not prevented their continued repetition in play, book and paper. Against these, *I.N.R.I.*, *King of Kings* and *Golgotha* have been made—and made far better, and, perhaps, with less likelihood of provoking general irreverence, than the products of religious film societies. But *King of Kings* had to have a special licence to be shown in England, and then not at a cinema, while *Noah's Ark*, with Dolores Costello, and *The Crusades* can be shown anywhere. Is the Church not powerful enough to see that films which it can approve get a square deal?

That Church of which Pope Pius XI is spokesman seems, however, to be more worried by the bad than aware of the good. In that it lessens a case

which all of us wish to triumph. "Dances and variety acts," I read, "which are sometimes introduced serve to increase the stimulation of the passions". I had no idea that that was what boredom was—stimulation; nor did I realise that my balance could be upset by ladies whose fans are the only moving things about them. It is, of course, true that "the motion picture is viewed by people who are seated in a dark theatre," but that applies equally to services held in cathedrals, and if, therefore, "faculties, mental, physical and often spiritual, are relaxed," why should it be necessary at Lourdes and not in the Odeons, to have notices "Beware of Pickpockets"? The reason—films are presented "by men and women whose natural gifts are increased by training and embellished by every known art in a manner which may possibly become an additional source of corruption". Is it wicked to ask if warts are the only wear? Or to repeat, "Dost thou think, because thou art virtuous, there shall be no more cakes and ale?" "The motion picture has enlisted in its service luxurious appointments, pleasing music, the vigour of realism, every form of whim and fancy" . . . Those baroque buildings, the perfume, the coloured lights, the flowers and throbbing organ; the cinema borrowed them. How much of the trouble is due to them.

I have no wish to criticise any who seek to improve films. But let them first improve human nature, of which films are the expression. Let me,



"De Lawd" with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in GREEN PASTURES

(Warner)

know what encouragement was given to the production and exhibition of such works as *Kameradschaft*, *La Maternelle*, *Pasteur*, even *Mr. Deeds*, and I can the more readily stomach the difficulties put in the way of *St. Joan* and *Green Pastures*.

The film industry has taken many hard knocks. If, when it turns to two such subjects as the last, it meets with obstacles, who can blame it if it finds it safer to continue churning out the stuff it has always been safe to churn out? "The essential purpose of art, its *raison d'être*", it is gratifying to read in the Encyclical, "is to assist in the perfection of the moral personality, which is man, and for this reason it must itself be moral". But to be moral does not forbid depicting the immoral; indeed, it sometimes demands it. If the foundation may not be God on one hand, nor the portrayal of evil on the other, are we not likely to meet in a point, "a kind

of nothing"—in fact, through well-meant if not unbiassed injunctions, to reach exactly the kind of mid-way materialism which marked the Jacobean drama? Our pastors and prelates should only have to remember what followed in the eighteenth century to reconsider the effect of their utterances. It is, indeed, "unfortunate" that their edicts should leave us with a sense of what is frowned on. It is disappointing that the Holy See appears more alarmed by evil than inspired by the potentialities or the achievements for good. What can make us more cynical than that its favoured body, The League of Decency, should have to protest against the Canadian banning of *Green Pastures* or that its much-vaunted campaign should result in Mae West "getting by" as a hot-religionist in *Klondike Annie*, whilst Bergner may not be seen in *St. Joan*?

CHILDREN AND THE CINEMA

THE British Film Institute Conference on Films for Children will be held on Friday, November 20th, at the Queen Mary Hall, Y.W.C.A., Great Russell Street, London, W.C.1. More than a hundred educational, religious and social organisations are sending representatives to the Conference as well as the General Council of the Cinematograph Exhibitors' Association and the film renting and producing companies.

The Conference will be opened at 10.30 a.m. with Mr. A. C. Cameron, Governor of the British Film Institute, in the chair, and the first paper will be presented by Mr. S. Rowson, President of the British Kinematograph Society, who will outline the dimensions of the problem. The second paper will deal with the kind of films children like and what elements films and film programmes for children should contain. It will be given by Dr. Emanuel Miller, who is a member of the Child Guidance Council and Hon. Director of the East London Child Guidance Clinic. The chairman for the afternoon Sessions will be Mr. Theo Fligelstone, President of the Cinematograph Exhibitors' Association. At the first session Mr. Sidney Bernstein, who has had long and varied experience in organising children's performances, will deal with the attempts made by the film trade to provide film entertainment for children and the difficulties which have arisen. The last session will be devoted to a discussion of what practical steps might be taken. The opening speakers will include Miss I. D. Marris of the Mothers' Union, Mr. John Sargent, Director of Education to the Essex Education Committee, Mr. F. A. Ring, member of the Executive Committee of the National Union of Teachers, Mr. K. A. Nyman, Chairman of the London and Home Counties Branch of the C.E.A., and Ex-Bailie James Welsh, of the Scottish Branch of the C.E.A.

On Saturday morning, November 21st, a special children's performance will be held at the Metropole

Cinema, Victoria, which has been generously lent for the occasion. The films will be specially chosen and the final discussion of the Conference will take place immediately after the performance.

Admission to the Conference is by ticket only. Applications for tickets, which should be addressed to the British Film Institute, will be met as far as is possible

Horrific Films

In July, within a few weeks of Lord Tyrrell's remarks on horrific films at the C.E.A. Conference (reported in our last issue), two films not classified as horrific by the British Board of Film Censors were so classified by the L.C.C. and by the Middlesex and Surrey County Councils. The L.C.C. Entertainments Committee has now decided that from January 1st, 1937, children under 16 shall not in any circumstances be admitted to a cinema during the showing of a film which has been classified as horrific by the B.B.F.C. or by the L.C.C. At present children may be admitted if accompanied by parents or responsible guardians although exhibitors are bound to display a notice stating "This film is unsuitable for children." In future the notice will read "Children under 16 not admitted."

New Censorship Categories?

The Public Morality Council is to send a deputation to the Home Secretary on films for children and ways of preventing children from seeing films which are unsuitable for them. The Council are considering the advantages of three censorship categories: one for films to which children may not be admitted in any circumstances; one for "family" films; and one for films specially suitable for children.

The Hendon Education Committee has passed a resolution that "in no circumstances shall children under 16 years of age be permitted to attend performances of 'A' films." The resolution has been circulated to all local education committees for their consideration.



Gary Cooper in MR. DEEDS GOES TO TOWN

(Columbia)

FILMS OF THE QUARTER

By John Marks

Film Critic of *The New Statesman & Nation*

IN the first week of the present quarter, *Fury* was presented at the Empire: Mr. Alistair Cooke in the last issue of SIGHT AND SOUND gave Hollywood and the American censors "irrevocable credit" for letting it be shown; prophesied that, "short of a miracle," it would remain the best film of the year; and had no time for more. The notice of Fritz Lang's masterly study of mob-violence must wait, he said—and he left for that cultured region of the U.S. known as New England, where a peaceful concourse was to gather for Harvard's tercentenary celebrations, and where lynching is no more frequent than it is in Surrey. I, on the other hand, having seen the film, and fully agreeing with Mr. Cooke, went off for an untimely holiday in Spain, and there, watching outbursts of collective enthusiasm for destruction, was frequently reminded of Lang's blundering small-town sadists, who had less excuse than the Catalan peasants for running amok.

"The recurrent, long-drawn-out paroxysms of crowds are always provoked, encouraged and pro-

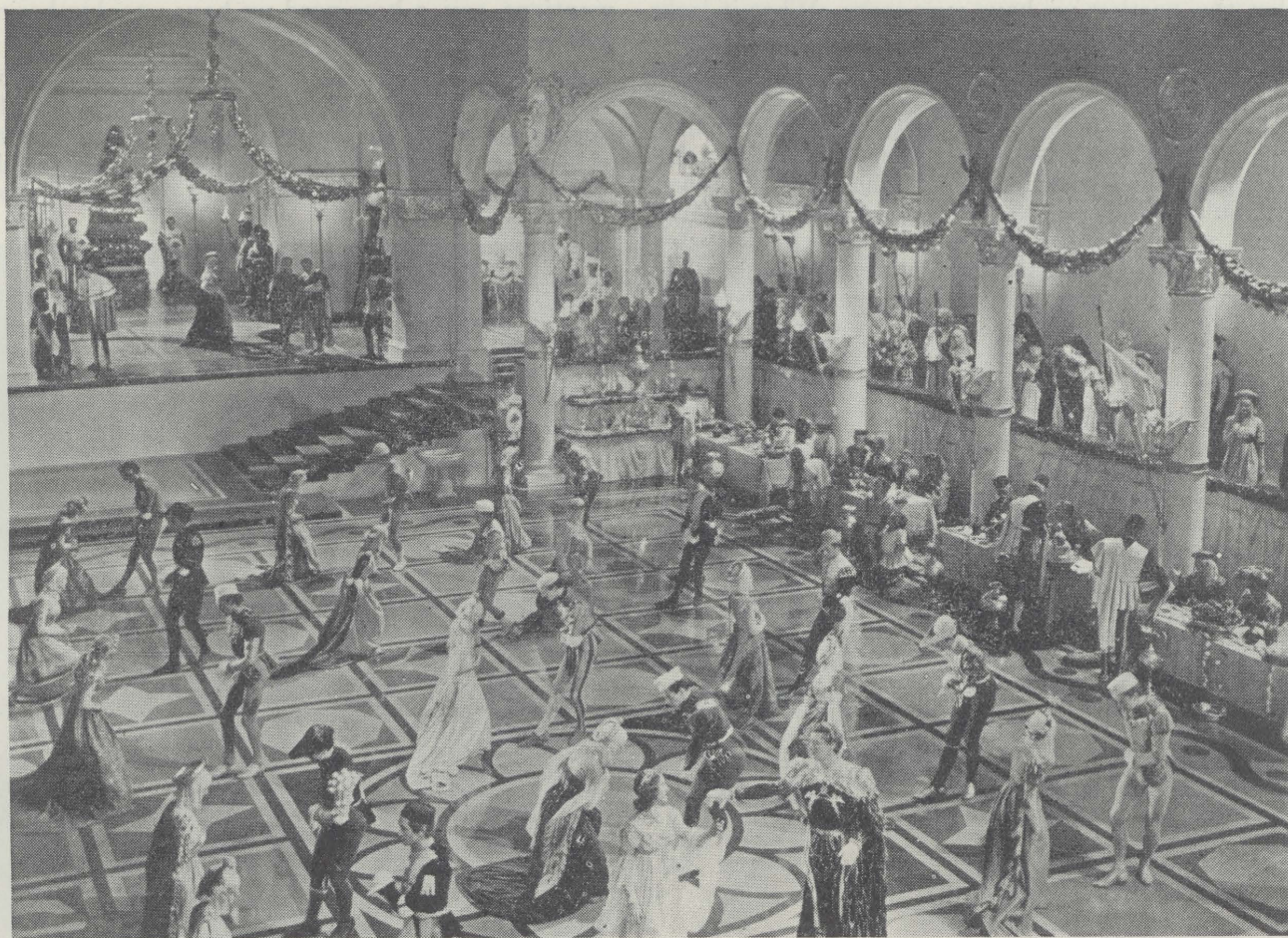
longed by stupidity and violence," Céline has said—and it is this foul phenomenon that Lang has expressed in moving pictures as profound as the best of the Russian cinema. One's principal criticism of *Fury* is that lengthy court-room scenes, even when sociologically interesting, are never good film material. The drama and dexterities of legal debate are a fad of the Americans and the movies; here it was essential to thrash the problem out verbally—and it might have been (but wasn't) done verbosely. Yet I should hazard that Lang had less say in these sequences of the film than in the action—the lynching itself and the vile contagion of frenzy which caused it. There was one shot—of the sheriff (Edward Ellis) grimly determined to defend his authority and his prisoner against the oncoming mob, with its growl of vengeance in our ears, and the camera steadily advancing, dragging us forward in the ranks of the unseen rioters, identified with their passion, cowardice and ferocity—that was magnificent, as fine a moment of vision

as any so far achieved by the talkies. *Fury* had certain faults, but in my opinion, since the screen began to talk, no other serious film except *The Front Page* has so clearly shown that here is a new art and what this new art can do.

Looking over the rest of the catch, we find one or two large and flapping fish among the cold, limp smaller fry which will be accepted on the market as edible but lacking in food-value. That glittering monster from the warm waters of Biography Bay, a goggle-eyed specimen—and no wonder, with its gullet full of moidores and minnows!—we call *The Great Ziegfeld*. Of course, it's swell to look at—or swollen—like a glorified goldfish; but then, if you examine it, its tail falls right off. One might perhaps keep it in a glass case—which is more than you could do with this dead whale here. Strange that Paris fashions should have been named after it: *Anthony Adverse* gowns and capes . . . Too huge, you'd have thought, for even the most ambitious *toilette*. We'll just have to leave it with the rest; we can't sling it back.

For it is naturally only just and democratic that the most one can do is to walk out of bad films and return indifferent books, unread, to the library; but improvement would come quicker if publishers had to refund money to any reader dissatisfied with their wares and if films judged

below standard were to qualify for an *auto de fe*. For appearance's sake, it would have to be a big popular vote, passed before the film could be generally released. Some such high-handed system would at any rate—it may be hoped—prevent the astonishingly incompetent screening of Shakespeare which, even since *Romeo and Juliet*, seems likely to continue. Almost complete and consistent bungling of the opportunities offered by Shakespeare to the maker of films was as marked a feature of *As You Like It* as the extraordinary unevenness of Frl. Bergner's wanton and worldly Rosalind. Her husband and director has declared that he did nothing in this film of which he felt Shakespeare might not approve (whether he was thinking of an Elizabethan ghost or a contemporary reincarnation of Shakespeare, none can say); and last year Herr Reinhardt expressed his satisfaction at producing *A Midsummer Night's Dream* without any restraint on his (and Warner Brothers') imagination. Yet one would expect any schoolchild to see that neither this pious nor that prancing approach to the problem takes us very far towards the filming of Shakespeare. Maybe, if at Elstree we had consulted the child of four, as Groucho suggested—or of fourteen (but not an *English* schoolchild; that would never do)—we should have got something on the lines of the late Irving Thalberg's *Romeo*



The Capulet Ball from *ROMEO AND JULIET*

(M.G.M.)



Elisabeth Bergner and
Mackenzie Ward in
AS YOU LIKE IT

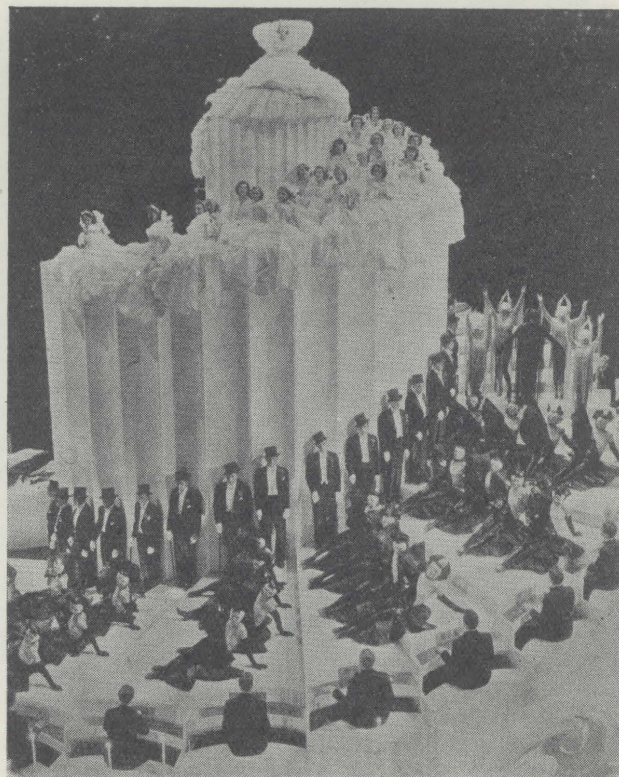
(Fox)

and Juliet, though less elaborate. For this is a real, solemn, slap-up costume-piece of Shakespeare, with everything to recommend it, except perhaps two essential virtues and the trailer, which was by far the nastiest we have ever seen. What it lacks could be added in subsequent productions, for I suspect that its faults of 'not enough' and 'too much' resulted from the attitude of Norma Shearer's husband to his last, and best, film—which may have been a combination of the untrammelled Reinhardt, and head-on Czinner, formulæ, but was also characterised, thank Heavens, by a certain sense of cinema. What Shakespeare needs on the screen is simple care and a sight more understanding than any of these gentlemen showed. *As You Like It* was good when it wasn't a movie at all—except that the actors were over life-size and could be heard everywhere in the theatre: Leon Quartermaine's delivery of the Seven Ages of Man speech was magnificent. He and Olivier found themselves in a talkie, and made the most of it, when they strode backchatting through Arden. But what an Arden! Fake flora and genuine fauna prodded in from the wings—why take a camera to it at all? Drury Lane would have done just as well—and there'd have been more room on that stage for the skittish Rosalind to scamper in.

Apart from a tender but not entirely suitable portrayal of Juliet, and several weak acting performances, the Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer film is a fair beginning—but only that, a tentative first

though it is rich in metaphor and so is the screen, because its pictures dance, allude and illustrate, yet the camera is not always obliged to skip as quick as thought; so that not invariably when the poet mentions, say, a bear need we have one lumbering into view.

In Thalberg's production (directed by Cukor) Shakespeare is appreciated as a librettist: the camera serves to clarify the incidents and outline of his plot. That is half the battle—the easier half. His words are poetry, an awkward fact which most



From **THE GREAT ZIEGFELD**

(M.G.M.)

Carole Lombard and William Powell in MY MAN GODFREY
(General Film)



of Thalberg's actors did their best to overlook, shying as far as possible into prose. Basil Rathbone, a versatile, capable actor, was the exception; his Tybalt was excellent. But to film Shakespeare, with all the magnificent resources of the screen at one's disposal, to use them well—though much too lavishly—and yet to miss, or dodge, the verbal values of his poetry, is surely to fail, without excuse, in an enterprise which deserved to be undertaken

with greater confidence. As we feared, the Midas touch of Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer has frozen (and perhaps thwarted) the designs of Mr. Oliver Messel. Lush or finicky, and sometimes lovely, the film's construction of Verona is as uneven as it is varied. The stage is evidently set for some solemnity; love's tragic pyre is marvellously contrived; all that is lacking is the fire of passion.

Anyway, Shakespeare wrote his scripts a long time ago, and since his time the cinematograph was invented. It has been put to good use, this pleasing



toy, on several occasions—as for instance, quite recently, when Frank Capra brought that shrewd provincial, Mr. Deeds, to town and Gregory la Cava recounted the fortunes of *My Man Godfrey*. Both are first-class comedies and whoever enjoys the one will like the other, though they are as dissimilar as pretty chalk and wholesome cheese. They must be classed in different categories because, being good films and dated 1936, both naturally play at sociology, but the one comes as near as no matter to meaning what it says and the other is an insincere, amusing gesture made in flippant salute to a serious problem; it is conscious of its inadequacy but content to be the funnier of the two. I am aware that Capra's is the better film, because it's honest rather than slick, places humour before farce, and is more human, more significant than its rival—which personally, I admit, I preferred. Gary Cooper has never given a performance to compare with his Mr. Deeds, that makes the Capra film a joy to watch; few actors have. Carole Lombard, supported by a brilliant cast, paints in *My Man Godfrey* an even wittier portrait of the clever female fool than she did in *Twentieth Century*. Capra's film is, we repeat, sympathetic and as near sincerity on the stark topic of undeserved poverty and undeserved wealth as capitalist Hollywood is likely to get; it is naturally and deliberately sentimental. In *My Man Godfrey* the underdogs are just a bunch of honest bank-presidents down on their luck, the altruistic butler is really a Harvard man, and the happy ending hands out luxury all round, spelling

Jessie Matthews in IT'S LOVE AGAIN

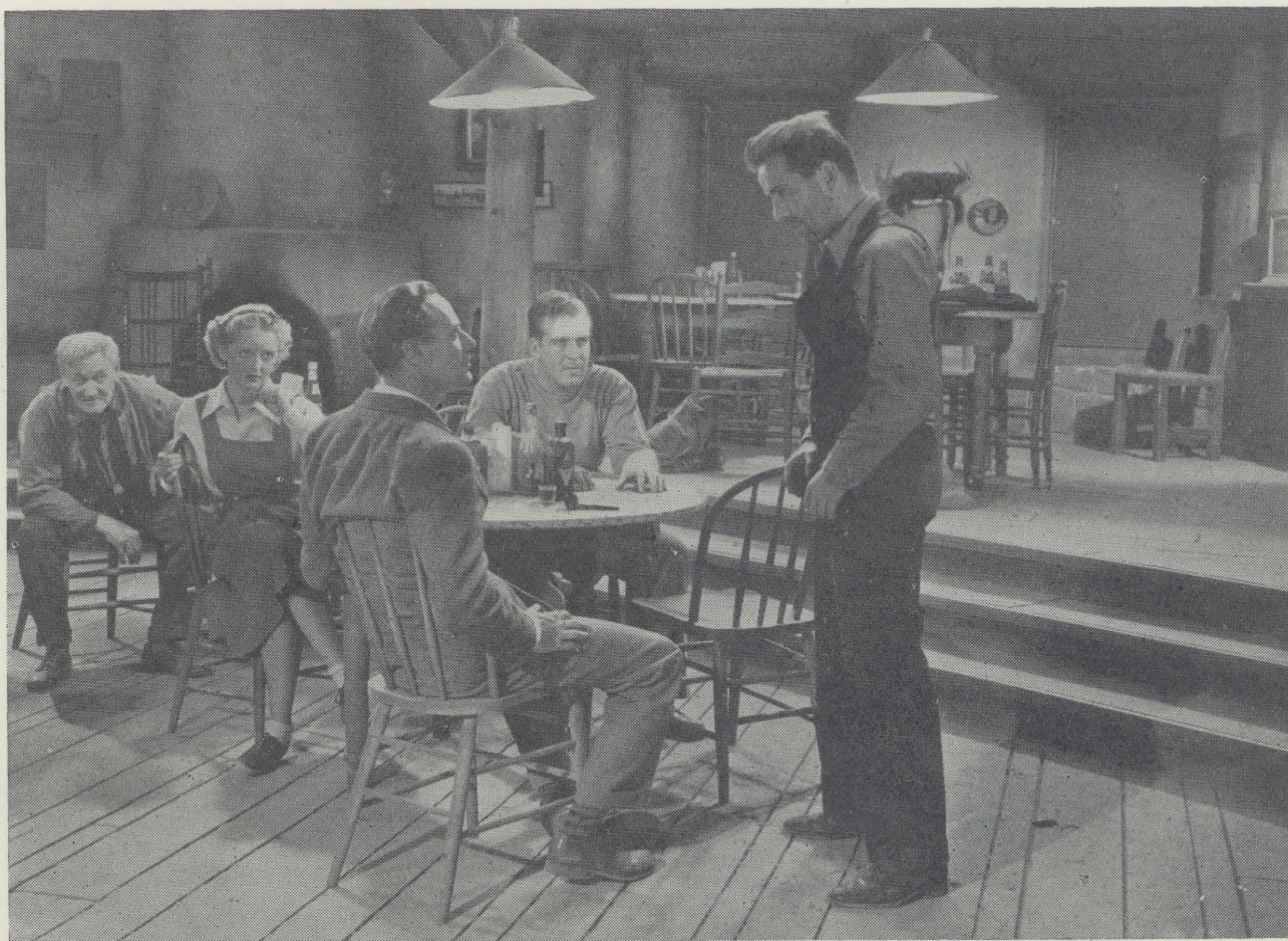
(G.B.D.)

senseless security with a capital \$; it is frankly just a flip and mannered comedy. The dialogue of either film is equally good, but in general the acting honours are with La Cava's team and, if you ask me, the direction of his picture is even surer and more successful.

Of British films shown this quarter, there was something to be said for *It's Love Again*, a 'musical' which was at least fast and funny enough to damage Mr. Cooke's assertion that "dancing, pathos, gayety (sic)" are "things we never could or will do." In our old-fashioned way we would, it's true, be content with gaiety, but this film displayed a pleasant sense of the absurd and the wistful Miss Matthews dances quite prettily. *Song of Freedom* was also good up to a point—that point being the dialogue, which is still where nine out of ten British films go wrong. *Pace* Miss Winifred Holmes, who has spoken of the dissertations in *Things to Come* as "taut, tense, dramatic and full of point" (to read), I should place the latest Wells film, *The Man Who Could Work Miracles*, among those nine. Words plus tricks don't make a talkie, and it should by now be abundantly clear that Mr. Wells cannot.

The Petrified Forest, a well-intentioned, bogus and unfeasible film, was probably the most interest-

ing of countless second-rate photoplays this quarter, among which *The Gorgeous Hussy* and *The General Died at Dawn* may claim a bare mention. The first of these presented Joan Crawford in a comparatively new light, as the eternal Modern Girl of a hundred years ago; an enthusiastic film biography of Andrew Jackson, it was inspired by the imminent prospect of presidential elections and was meant to suggest, by historical analogy, that Roosevelt should be re-elected; the second was a tough, upstanding thriller, which sat down in the middle, although Lewis Milestone directed it. But a couple of Continental pictures were better than either of these films, while Feyder's *La Kermesse Héroïque* has passed well into the large first class of 1936 productions. It is followed, at the end of the quarter—but at a considerable distance in merit—by *Dodsworth* and *Swing Time*, the former a serious, painstaking film of real distinction, so far as acting and photography are concerned, though on the solid side, deliberately slow, commendable; the latter universally voted a great disappointment. Familiarity has bred discontent with the plot of the Astaire-Rogers films—but not, of course, with their dancing: that remains superb, though only in two of their four films has the scenario provided them with an even passable excuse for it.



Bette Davies, Leslie Howard, and Humphrey Bogart in *THE PETRIFIED FOREST*

(Warner)

RAINBOW DANCE

Len Lye's Latest Film

Reviewed by A. Vesselo

IT is good to find Len Lye, after a brief dalliance with the puppet-film, returning once more to his own domain. The present effort is neither a repetition with modifications, in the style of *Kaleidoscope*, nor a digression, on the lines of *The Birth of the Robot*; but, without abandoning the tradition established by *Colour Box*, skips and capers into fresh and more extensive territory. It is again an advertisement-film—this time for the Post Office Savings Bank: it would be unreasonable, however, to complain about the excessive naturalism of the propaganda-climax in such surroundings, since without the G.P.O. the film could never have been made at all.

The innovations consist in an important alteration in colour-technique, effected with the aid of Gasparcolor stock, and in the use of abstract colour-forms not on their own but in relation to a tangible if fantastically-treated theme. To take first the matter of technical method: the three colour-separation records are produced, not by photographing with filters from a coloured original, but by arranging the separate records deliberately in varying black-and-white densities, determined entirely according to the colour which they will assume in combination in the final print. There is thus no enfeebling and distorting translation of one type of colour into another: all the significant colours, whether attached to objects taken from reality or to abstract shapes, are conceived and composed directly in terms of the Gasparcolor dye. Here non-naturalistic colour-work leaps ahead of its opposite, overcoming one of the major imperfections normally inherent in present-day processes. But the accuracy of control which now becomes possible involves a patience, a concentration, an understanding of the medium so thorough that for these alone Len Lye deserves our respectful commendation.

The other outstanding innovation, the semi-realistic undercurrent which has here been added, may be summarised in Len Lye's own words: "A City man is seen standing in the rain; the rain stops and he goes off on his holidays. The Post Office Savings Bank puts a pot of gold at the end of the Rainbow". Recognisable rainbows, formalised sky- and sea-shots, and the figure of the City

man executing symbolic ballet-movements, are elements in the action. Within this type of context animated colour-composition is given a wider field, for it can now operate more freely in three dimensions instead of two; it can be cut in scenes; and, without sacrificing its predominance or basic autonomy, it can regulate and intensify a specifically-designated mood, suggested outside itself but still in visual terms on the screen. These wider opportunities carry with them dangers and disabilities: generally speaking, there may be a temptation to render more superficial the implications of colour—on the analogy of programme-music—and the interplay of colour and expressed meaning may at times result in conflict rather than intensification. Static backgrounds may easily tend to interfere with the flow of colour movement; and continuity as such becomes infinitely more complicated. If, in view of such considerations, *Colour Box* still seems Len Lye's most perfect and self-contained film, that is not to be wondered at: *Rainbow Dance* must be judged in accordance with the greater magnitude of the attempt. So judged, it can awaken only enthusiasm, together with eagerness for future developments.

RAINBOW DANCE : The G.P.O. Film Unit

Production: Basil Wright and Alberto Cavalcanti
Colour and Sound Synchronisation: Jack Ellit
Dance: Rupert Doone
Music: Rico's Creole Band
Colour Process: Gasparcolor
Distributors: A.B.F.D.

One thing should be said. Just occasionally it may be felt that the formalised naturalistic images are mere thinnings-down of reality—less, not more solid than their original: this is most noticeable with the obvious negative-shots of a girl's head turning from side to side. Such impressions are at all costs to be avoided. However we may define art, it is never a thinning-down, but always a building-up; and any hint of the brain-spun is bound to defeat its ends.



Hans Albers and Gusti Huber in SAVOY HOTEL 217

(By courtesy of the Curzon Cinema)

CONTINENTAL FILMS

Reviewed by A. Vesselo

DURING the summer months the Film Society, like other, more academic bodies, holds a long vacation; and for a while also the Continental cinemas, relaxing from their energetic researches after fresh material, give themselves over to revivals. In July, the first month of the present quarter, there were no new Continental films showing in London: in August there were two: in September, the dribble once more became a flow. But if the summer holidays are responsible for a dearth, it is surely not possible to blame them for the quality of the new films when they do arrive; and on a general view, that quality has been distinguished only for its consistent mediocrity. By far the most interesting phenomenon of the past few months has been the prolonged run at the Forum of the Soviet silent

film *Bed and Sofa*, which began on, May 17, 1935, and at the time of going to press has not yet given place.

Three very mild "firsts" are included in our batch—a "first Dutch comedy," a "first Egyptian film" (at any rate the first exhibited here), and the first Italian film to be shown on English screens for a number of years. The last-named, *Re Burlone*, has its setting in the Kingdom of Naples in 1840; opens with comedy, veers off uneasily into melodrama, and has political implications whose precise meaning and purpose it is hard to determine: was there originally a reference at the end to the present régime in Italy? The continuity of the plot is never more than moderate, and the soundest point of production is clearly the camera-work. As for

the preliminary scenes, which set out to stress the "quaintness" of an early railway-journey, their utter falseness is made evident by a news-reel item which happened to be incorporated in the same programme. This item dealt with the death of Blériot, and demonstrated conclusively the superior dramatic value which attaches to pioneering, and the poverty of an imagination which finds in it only something to giggle at.

The Egyptian film *Wedad the Slave*—another period-piece, about Cairo in the early 18th century—cannot without conscious brutality be criticised according to normal standards, for its style is too crude and its story too naïve; though to the Western ear the unaccustomed strains of Egyptian music may have a certain attraction. The anticipatory sub-titles, interspersed in the manner of chapter-headings, take one back twenty years or more. Holland's *De Kribbebijter* is adapted from a stage-play, and the derivation is by no means impossible to detect. Neither the theme nor its treatment is of any tremendous value: faults in construction, a tendency to weak transitions, and a nondescript musical accompaniment tinnily recorded, all help to make the action seem tedious. The chief factor on the other side is the acting, which, coming from a cast of practised stage-players, is often witty. Perhaps the film might have won more appreciation had it been made as a silent comedy a dozen years ago—its form somehow smacks of the period.

Fascist politics and the conditions for good film-making evidently have little common ground. Italy apparently feels its own lack, for—according to a recent United Artists' announcement—producers and actors from Hollywood have been invited to make themselves at home in the new "Cines" studios, under the auspices of *Il Duce* himself. Meanwhile the film-reputation of Nazi Germany rests largely on the shoulders of Gustav Ucicky and Fritz Arno Wagner, and it may be assumed that they are beginning to feel its weight.

Their latest opus, *Savoy-Hotel 217*, has its background in Imperial Russia. Compared with other Continental films of the quarter, this one has points; but its intentions in the first place are insufficiently clear. Starting off heavily, with a hint of possible excursions into the field of morbid psychology, it reveals itself after a time as a simple Hitchcock-melodrama; developing at length, like other melodramas of the same kind, into little more than an exercise in technique. Stress is laid on plasticity of camera-movement, on cunningly-placed properties, on close-range photography (see also *Secret Agent*), on the allusiveness of mirrors and patterned windows; but in the wider spheres of general construction directorial virtuosity shows a blunted edge. The ideas behind the intercutting of scenes—of contrast and parallelism, of noise balanced against relative silence, of animation against intensity—

are clear enough. Yet every now and then, on a cut or a fade, the continuity cracks suddenly, the action hangs agape. As for the atmosphere, it is that of a spiritual as well as ultimately of an actual underworld; and all the characters, not least the ponderously-built hero, are curiously alien and unsympathetic.

France this time makes no contributions, Austria three: of the latter, the most obvious common factor is an over-exposed appearance in much of the photography—due probably to inferior laboratory-work, and adding a marked variability even to the elaborately-taken shots of *Singende Jugend*. Continuity, too, is inclined to be distinctly weak at the joints. *Maria Bashkirtseff* is a highly cosmopolitan affair—all about Russians in Paris, but hardly pretending to conceal the Central-European origins of its cast. Adapted from a well-known diary, the film has a notable air of having been reduced to fit the requirements of a formula: the heroine's lung-troubles, baldly indicated, and her subsequent sad demise recall conspicuously *La Dame Aux Camélias*; while "gay Paree" in the 'eighties serves as an easy variant of "gay Vienna" under the Empire. Hans Jaray's *Guy de Maupassant* resembles a study of a self-opinionated youth barely out of his minority, rather than of a successful novelist in the thirties. *Sylvia und ihr Chauffeur* is just another Viennese musical comedy. A snatch of song, some amusing comic by-play, the sketchiest of themes, and not even a sprinkling of logic, are practically all that nowadays seems to be felt necessary for a film of this sort. Admittedly, the *raison d'être* of a musical comedy is primarily the music and the comedy; but that is still no reason why the parts should be hustled together in so negligent and peremptory a manner. Even the purely fantastic demands some inner unity of development and purpose to sustain it.

And lastly, *Singende Jugend*. This extravagantly sentimental hotch-potch, with its ill-assimilated reminiscences of *Maedchen in Uniform* and *Poil de Carotte*, is a puff for the Vienna Choirboys. There are pleasing outdoor scenes, and one attractive passage of choir-singing in a church; but the sickly, mechanical nonsense, devoid of either form or restraint, which provides these brief virtues with a shallow resting-place, could not in a decade of special pleading find convincing justification.

* * *

From France, at the end of an empty quarter, comes *La Kermesse Héroïque*, directed by Jacques Feyder. The action takes place in the little Flanders town of Boom, on the eve of festival, in the year 1616; and concerns itself with the briefly-heralded arrival of a Spanish grandee and his suite, the terror and desertion of the men-folk, agitated by memories of recent invasion, and the banding together of the women to greet the newcomers—unexpectedly

peaceable in intention—and to speed them eventually on their way. In lightness of mood, in subtlety of touch, in delineation of place and character, the film is strong: the direction of characters particularly, both individually and in mass, is carried out with brilliant assurance. Françoise Rosay, who may be remembered from *Marchand D'Amour*, leads the cast superbly as the Burgomaster's wife; but it is impossible not to mention also the uniquely satisfying performance of Louis Jouvert in the rôle of a lean but ravenous Dominican Friar; who ends an unctuous grace before meat with a forthright "J'ai faim", and whose liberal festival-night potations do not prevent him from intoning a smooth monkish epigram, at the appropriate moment, during a marriage service which he is called from his imbibings to conduct. Through the whole film runs a current of cleverly-manœuvred ridicule of bourgeois fears and bourgeois aspirations, as personified by the honest citizens of Boom.

These excellences are not to be denied; nevertheless, it is a little difficult to acquiesce in all the wild praises which the film has evoked. Flaws of exposition and continuity are not altogether lacking, and there are certain obviousnesses of construction; but more important is the cloak of ambiguity which has been thrown over the satire by the period-setting. Satire is essentially a weapon to thrust at *modern* weaknesses; and in this context, inevitably, it appears at times rather to take the shape of that less potent, more trivial shaft, the guying of history. Moreover, one is perplexed to discern any vast humour in the possibility—though it be no more—of such bloody and cruel warfare as was indulged in by the Spaniards at this time: without modification, the joke is apt to seem a trifle thin.

The superimposed English sub-titles have been atrociously processed. Wherever they occur, the photography, otherwise first class, is smudged and darkened.

DOCUMENTARY FILMS

Reviewed by A. Vesselo

COVER TO COVER (Gt. Britain)

Production: Paul Rotha, Strand Film Company in collaboration with the National Book Council

Direction: Alexander Shaw

Photography: George Noble

Verse: Winifred Holmes

Narration: Ion Swinley, Leslie Mitchell

Music: Raymond Bennell

Length: 1,855 ft.; 21 mins.

Distribution: A.B.F.D.

ROOFTOPS OF LONDON (Gt. Britain)

Production: Paul Rotha, Strand Film Company

Direction and Photography: Ralph Keene and Paul Burnford

Length: 1,250 ft.; 14 mins.

Distribution: Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer

TO travel with a perceiving and impressionable eye among the byeways of common experience is both the prerogative and the task of the documentary film. In these explorations every new subject, every novel aspect encountered, demands in some degree a revision of method to deal with it; and difficulties of approach are never lacking.

Of difficulties and possibilities alike, *Cover to Cover* offers a valuable example. Its subject-matter is books—books of all sorts, their history, their printing, their publication, their distribution, and the purpose they serve. In an introductory sequence the origins of writing are touched upon, and a brief consideration of books and inscriptions among the early civilisations sends us forward through more modern times to the invention of printing and to the present day. The intricacies of current procedure are illustrated by passages showing the production, in its various stages, of a fictitious book by a fictitious author; while, as if to add a more concrete reference, short interviews are included with such captains of letters as Somerset Maugham, Julian Huxley and A. P. Herbert—not to mention so vigorous a representative of feminine literary thought as Miss Rebecca West.

The conciseness of style of the opening shots is an indication of the care which has clearly been devoted to construction. It is no fundamental discredit to the producers, faced with obstacles due directly to the nature of their material, if their efforts are not always so well rewarded. Now and then there are minor lapses of detail: an allusion, for instance, to Caxton is neutralised by the appearance in close-up of an obviously latter-day type-setter in shirt-sleeves; and mention of the "thrill" of reading coincides with a shot of a languid young lady looking up from a book to study her watch.



From COVER TO COVER and CHAPTER AND VERSE

(Strand)

But it is the general continuity of the modern sequences which raises the most serious questions. How far can we say that the fictitious insertions assist explanation, rather than weaken realism? Or that the interviews provide enlightenment, rather than intrude upon the action? The epigrams of the great can sound remarkably platitudinous when cut into an irrelevant context. Again, the analysis of the successive processes involved in printing and publication is sketchily carried out, and despite considerable pictorial effectiveness, has little or no value as elucidation. At times it seems as if the producers have actually been afraid to be too searching, lest they should decrease the film's popular appeal: the result, in sum, is a certain air of over-simplification. Here, indeed, is a problem which is bound to become more pressing as the documentary film establishes a wider contact with the cinema-going public; but it would be the greatest of pities if this were allowed to restrict advance.

The recitation of verses as an accompaniment to various scenes, in the manner of *Night Mail*, urges us once more to inquire precisely what place poetry can find in a film. The highest poetry is concrete and self-complete, and if other, external elements are added to it, then they must fall into the background. But in the present usage the poetry itself must become a part of the background, must be subdued to the purposes of a greater whole. Its major functions have been usurped by the film at large, and if it is not to interfere with the continuity and create a conflict between picture and sound-track, then it must be denuded of its more vital qualities and thinned down to a thing of simple rhymes and meanings and obvious rhythms. In these circumstances, when emotion slides easily into sentimentality and profundity always into obscurity, what are the virtues which remain?—the virtues only, it seems, of a light and amusing accentuation of particular visual movements.

These criticisms are not to be taken as implying that *Cover to Cover* is anything but an able and interesting treatment of a complicated subject. Even for its failings we may be grateful, for they are possibly more instructive than achievement would have been. Another version of the film is being issued, in which the verse is replaced by commentary.

Rooftops of London is slighter in conception and its course more straightforward. It takes us up above the streets of the city, among the spires and the weathervanes, introduces us to the roof-top workers and the steeplejacks, and proceeds thereafter to show us some of the uses to which a roof may be put—for gymnastics, as a rehearsal-platform for a beauty-chorus, as an extra floor of a restaurant, or even for bathing or as a putting-green. It comes to a close at nightfall, with the lights of theatres and neon-signs shining over the West End.

The film does not start off immediately with commentary, which breaks in with some abruptness. From its first appearance, the commentary is inclined to be too continuous, and even were it

always more completely apt than it is in fact, the pictures might more consistently have been permitted to speak for themselves. Clashes between voice and vaguely "atmospheric" music ought also to be guarded against: the same thing is observable at certain points in the previous film, and, indeed, very frequently elsewhere. Another technical weakness, small, perhaps, but unnecessary, is the static drag at the end of moving shots, when the camera comes flatly to a standstill. Details of this sort may appear trifling, but they have a considerable cumulative effect.

In idea, *Rooftops of London* is best regarded as a journalistic essay; roving, informative, justifying itself rather by the opportunities which it provides for agreeable shots, for curiosities of outlook, than by any subtler function which it may fulfil. Probably the balance of items would have adjusted itself more evenly had the "pretty-lady" interest been a little less emphatic; but in its own category this is on the whole a competent piece of work.

LONDON AFTER MIDNIGHT

Production: B.S. Productions

Length: 1,732 ft.; 19 mins.

Distribution: Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer

THIS film—based on a series of articles from *The Star*—begins, by an appropriate coincidence, precisely at the point where *Rooftops of London* leaves off: that is to say, with the lights of the West End after dark, viewed in this case from nearer the ground. Shots of emptying cinemas and theatres prepare us for a study of the post-theatre diversions provided by a cabaret; but a suspicion that this is to be the film's chief content is shortly relieved by a sortie into the night streets, upon the midnight striking of Big Ben.

The scenes which follow, in close order, range spaciouly over a variety of topics: among them the activities of a newspaper office in the small hours (with Mr. Horrabin completing a sketch), the night-gang at work in the Underground railway, London's river, the capture of a pair of cracksmen, the sorting-office at Mount Pleasant, Smithfield, bread-baking, the quieting of a crying baby by an embarrassed father—and so to the break of day.

The incident of the crying baby, together with the burglar-catching episode and one or two others of the same class, are evidently intended to supply humorous or dramatic relief, and, in particular, to assist the continuity. There may conceivably be something to be said for this method—at any rate the difficulties which it is advanced to meet are real enough; but an almost inevitable superficiality of tone weakens the purpose of the interspersions, while the burglar-episode is, in addition, made less convincing by its background music: natural sound and silence should plainly have been its only accompaniment. Brief attempts to describe instructively the processes involved in the printing of newspapers and the sorting of letters leave, as

one might have anticipated, little impression upon the mind. Some of the interiors, presumably through unavoidable conditions of taking, are very sketchily lit; but there are also some good exterior shots, notably one of Tower Bridge. The commentary, if not above the use of clichés and stock observations, is serviceable; and the same word might adequately be applied to the film as a whole.

THE NUTRITION FILM (Gt. Britain)

Production: Gas, Light and Coke Company

Direction: Edgar Anstey, assisted by Frank Sainsbury

Photography: Walter Blakeley and Arthur Fisher

Length: 2,000 ft.; 23 mins.

Distribution: Apply to Gas, Light and Coke Company

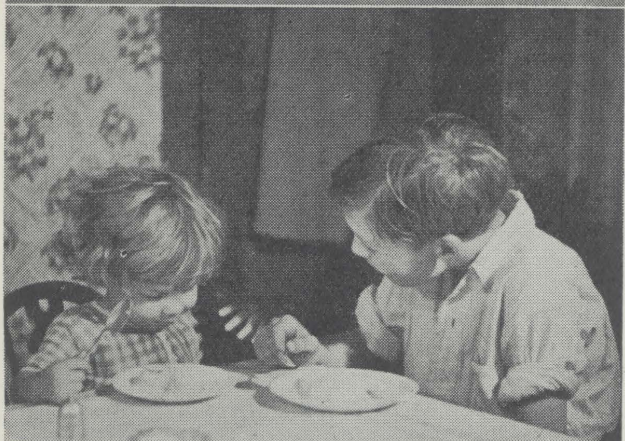
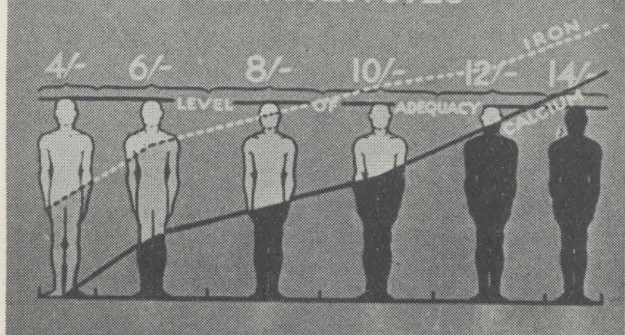
FOR the second time within a year the Gas Co. has issued a series of short films to advertise the services which it offers to consumers; and again, it has included among them one which is not strictly gas-propaganda at all, but a direct study of social conditions. Presumably on account of the great interest aroused by its predecessor—*Housing Problems*—*The Nutrition Film* has been made on a much more ambitious scale. Of the excellence of the principle behind it there can be no doubt whatever: at the same time, one may be forgiven for a certain hesitation in approving the general scheme adopted.

To the accompaniment of a precisely-delivered commentary by Julian Huxley, the film introduces us first of all to the dietetic researches of such workers as Sir John Orr; contrasts the physical development of well-fed Christ's Hospital boys with that of Council School and working boys of the same ages; goes off into a discussion of the relative values of different types of food, with diagrams—stressing here the close dependence of wrong feeding on poverty; interviews three working-class mothers on their food-problems; shows us, eventually, how local and Government bodies are trying to cope with the situation by the provision of free meals and the dissemination of knowledge; and interjects, every now and then, a discussion or a monologue by various authorities—Herbert Morrison on the work of the L.C.C., Viscount Astor on that of the League of Nations, and so on.

Assuming a necessary modicum of insight and competence in the producers, a film on this particular subject could hardly fail to be both moving and significant; anyone, therefore, with the least of humane instincts must inevitably welcome the efforts of all who have shared in its making. Indeed, if the film only serves to awaken in a few respectable and well-to-do citizens an elementary appreciation of the terrible facts, it will already have done much. But could it not have done more? As it stands, it is so overweighted with only partially relevant material that half the effect is lost. An inability to gauge accurately the limits of receptivity of a normal audience causes the later passages to drag;



CALCIUM AND IRON DEFICIENCIES



From THE NUTRITION FILM

blurring the earlier impressions instead of heightening them.

It is not merely a matter of length, nor of detail as such; it is not brevity, but *selection*, and continuity of interest and purpose, that are vital. Too great a variety of form and detail may well militate against these ends. In the present film two main purposes, each important, clash: the one, to stir us up against the prevalence of poverty, of which malnutrition is an invariable and dreadful concomitant; the other, to give us some idea of the essentials of a proper diet. Other minor purposes are added. Of the two, the first is undeniably the more serious; and although the discourses on vitamins and carbo-hydrates do help it up to a point, after that point they simply interfere. Further, they are never clear enough in themselves to leave us with anything more in our minds than a name or two, and the rough impression that milk is the basis of a good diet: all the rest is dissipated.

The most direct, most graphic items are the strongest: the interviews with poor mothers, in the style of *Housing Problems*—straight-forward, undramatized, infinitely revealing and shocking; and, for example, the shot of two rats, the one fed on what corresponds to a good-class diet, the other on a poor-class one—a contrast frightening even to the most conventional imagination. These are the things which hit hardest, which give the film its profoundest value.

CHAPTER AND VERSE (Gt. Britain)

Production: Paul Rotha, Strand Film Company, for the National Book Council

Direction: Stanley Hawes.

Photography: George Noble

Length: 16 mm. sound, about 1,200 ft.; 32 mins.

Distribution: G.-B. Equipments for the National Book Council

In contrast to *Cover to Cover* made for the theatres, *Chapter and Verse* was produced as a lecture film and must be approached as such in criticism. Its contents may be expressed quite briefly. After an introduction in which Sir Charles Grant Robertson, president of the National Book Council, describes books as the writer's medium for broadcasting his ideas, the film gives an account of the early forms of writing—on the walls of caves, on clay, wax and sheepskin—leading up gradually to the invention of printing and its introduction into England by Caxton. This first section closes with some comments by the Poet Laureate on Chaucer—though the camera in close-up is somewhat unkind to Mr. Masfield. The film proceeds with a description of papermaking, from the landing of the raw material at the dock, through the various processes at the mill, to the production of the finished article. Following naturally on this sequence is an account of book production. An author puts the finishing touches to his manuscript, it is accepted by the publishers, the type is set up, the proofs

corrected, the story printed and the sheets go off to the binders, in due course to become a book. This section closes with the affixing of the dust-wrapper. The film shows how the book, through shops, libraries and other mediums, goes out into the world, and concludes on the note: "Everywhere people are reading books: to understand the world or to forget it. And everywhere there are people who have still to realise the value of a book." With the exception of this last sequence which is in the impressionist manner of *Shipyard*, the film is simple and direct, conscious of its task of sober instruction. It cannot, of course, give a complete account of the developments and processes it illustrates, and each of the sections could easily be extended into a full film; but it succeeds in giving an illuminating general description and in building up a background picture of book production. The film is most confident when on the familiar documentary ground of the paper-making sequence and most impressive when, using the camera's faculty for relating quickly-changing scenes, it conveys the impression of books being read everywhere. FORSYTH HARDY.

HAPPY HAMPSTEAD (Gt. Britain)

Production: Supervised by J. S. Fairfax-Jones

Direction and photography: R. B. Pearce

Musical director: John Reynders

Length: 966 ft.; 11 mins.

Distribution: Denning Films

Happy Hampstead, for most people, means Bank Holiday fairs, roundabouts, coconut shies, and side-shows that promise more than they show. This Hampstead would have provided ample and good material for a one-reeler. But this film attempts a more difficult task and, in the same space, succeeds in presenting a picture of the three Hampsteads that make up Happy Hampstead. Opening quietly in the fields and wooded hills, among the trees and ponds, that provide Londoners with the attractions and amenities of the countryside within twenty minutes of Piccadilly Circus, the film moves down to Flask and Well Walk where, in the 18th century, Londoners came to drink the waters. Keats and Romney were then among Hampstead's famous residents; Dick Turpin made one of its famous inns notorious. Having wandered—but never aimlessly—through the Hampstead of the past, the film reaches a natural and effective climax on the Heath during the famous Bank Holiday Fair. Robin Pearce, director and cameraman, whose first film this is, has selected his material carefully and presented it straightforwardly. The quality of the photography is good, the fair scenes are well handled, and the commentary, although not always well recorded, adds interest to the first two sections and gives way appropriately in the Fair section to the noise that forms a large part of the fair. In a difficult type of film reporting this is a successful essay that will please those who live in Hampstead and interest those who have only heard of 'Appy 'Ampstead.

W. F.



From HAPPY HAMPSTEAD

(Denning)

BOOK REVIEWS

MOVIE PARADE, By Paul Rotha. (The Studio, Ltd. 10s. 6d.)

Reviewed by Hugh Gray

Here, in six hundred carefully selected stills covering thirty-three years of film production, Mr. Rotha has given us an interesting pictorial survey of the cinema. Motion, in fact, remembered in tranquility.

The contents is divided into three principal parts: Films of fiction; films of fact; *avant garde* and trick films. These three sections are again divided under the headings of adventure, comedy, romance, documentary and so forth, each being set out in chronological order.

In his introduction Mr. Rotha foreshadows criticism of this arrangement, and it is not unlikely that there will be some, not because of the framework, but because of what is included in the framework.

The ideas behind these classifications are to be found in the letterpress which precedes each section, and in which he reveals himself not as the chronicler but as the crusader. *Movie Parade* is, therefore, not just a selection of pictures. It is a pamphlet, a social pamphlet divided equally between an attack on films as entertainment and a defence of films as a form of social service.

Fact, not fiction, he suggests, is the proper object of the camera. Documentaries, not dope.

As a distinguished documentarian he is entitled to argue his case, but as I read him, I am reminded

of the old tag we learnt in the logic theatre—*qui nimis probat, nihil probat*.

Away, he says, with the profit system and box office! The film companies are just dope peddlers and until they are put out of business, or at least put in their insignificant place, choice of subjects and æsthetics are secondary concerns. All they do is fake and insincere. They drug the public mind for profit, serve the interests of our social system, cover up the hardship and injustice of the modern world, and draw the veil of glamour over the sadness of modern existence. Only films of sociological drama have any real value and then almost exclusively the Russian films. Is it really as bad as that? I am afraid it is.

"Only", he says, "in a cinema based on cultural and social purpose should we find tragedy permitted to be tragedy without fear of commercial failure, should we find a sociological approach to modern problems without that extra quality which the executives of our films business call "Box Office".

Personally, I would sooner have a bob's-worth of superficial entertainment than a pound's worth of cultural or social purpose and sociological approach. It seems a pity, therefore, that a great deal of my very real gratitude for this admirable selection of pictures should be based on its power to recall many happy moments in childhood, youth, and unregenerate manhood.

FILM AND THEATRE by Professor Allardyce Nicoll. (Harrap 7/6)

Reviewed by John Marks

PROFESSOR NICOLL, of Yale, is an enthusiastic film-fan. Despite its title, his new book leaves the theatre largely out of account: only six of its 190 pages are wholly devoted to the stage and its chance of successfully competing with the screen—a chance dependent on its abandoning naturalism for "universalising and conventionalism." The Professor reaches this conclusion from the discovery that the films, which fascinate him, have more tricks and greater realism at their command than ever could belong to the theatre. Although his investigation is conducted in somewhat stilted terms, with frequent recourse to inversion and other tiresome tics of "style," every point in his thesis is carefully weighed and the result is a thorough, succinct, interesting essay on the aesthetic of the film.

Admitting at the outset that very little of artistic merit has so far been achieved in the film, Professor Nicoll reminds us that the Elizabethan theatre was likewise slanged by contemporary men of taste.

From this excellent start Professor Nicoll, kindly but firmly disposing of the *avant-garde*, sets out to consider not "art products" but only commercial films that rank as "the very stuff for Hollywood." This sensible preference—Professor Nicoll is concerned exclusively with the talkies and the æsthetic significance of sound—is borne out by the films he most frequently examines for illustration of cinematic method: *The Barretts of Wimpole Street*, *The Informer*, *David Copperfield*. But as he warms to his task, citing with only mildly qualified approval such odd mistakes as *The*

Scoundrel and *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, or reckoning Henry VIII., *The House of Rothschild* and *Catherine of Russia* as particularly "worthy of our esteem," the impression grows on us that this don of drama is perhaps too easily pleased. His keen interest in the cinema is shown by an impressive fifty-page bibliography which, as it includes several negligible items, is even more exhaustive than his account of film technique, for in his survey of the talking-picture he never mentions Lubitsch, *The Front Page* or the three great sound films of René Clair.

Having enumerated all those factors that make for the wonderful selectivity of the film and its supple command of time and space and sound, Professor Nicoll, when we reach his final chapter, has convinced us that the screen has just a little something which the theatre has not got. In time, and in the right hands, this magic may be used to produce the first great filmic masterpiece since the movies were blessed with the gift of tongues—and what a mixed blessing it was—ten years ago. Meanwhile, what advantage has the legitimate drama—with its four walls and a passion, as Dumas said—over the plausible and illusive screen? More akin to the novel than the play, as the Professor

points out, why, with its powers of psychological penetration, does the cinema dismally fail when it attempts to translate literature on to the screen? Professor Nicoll bestows his approval on certain aspects of Hollywood's and Elstree's experiments with Shakespeare; he is surely too generous. For he himself has hinted that words are, of course, the crux of the whole matter, when he notes their failing power in the modern world and congratulates the cinema on the force of its visual symbols. That is why "our illustration in the picture-house is certainly less 'imaginative' than the illusion which attends us in the theatre"—because:—

"Owing to the universal development of reading, certain faculties possessed by men of earlier ages have vanished from us . . . Shakespeare's dialogue was written for an audience" by whom "the significance of words was more keenly appreciated" and to whom it was "certainly more concrete than it is to-day . . . Newspapers did not exist then; all men's knowledge of the larger world . . . had to come from hearing words . . . When Macbeth, in four lines, likened life to a brief candle, to a walking shadow and to a poor player, one may believe that for the ordinary spectator in the Globe . . . these three objects . . . became mental realities."

Some such "mental realities" the film, too, can create by its own methods; but at present its means of expression have outdistanced its meaning.

FILM MUSIC, by Kurt London. (Faber and Faber, 12/6)

Reviewed by M. D. Calvocoressi

IT has long been common knowledge that there are many problems special to film music; some purely æsthetic and others, far more important, raised by social, financial, and mechanical factors. None of these had been scientifically investigated so far, and we must be grateful to Dr. London for his lucid, thorough expositions and advice.

He makes it clear that film music, from both the technical and the artistic point of view, is a branch of the art different from any other, which has its own requirements and potentialities. Surveying the history of the genre, he is able to show not only how the wind blows, but also how it should blow. Leaving aside the atrocious "theme-song" method and the equally senseless and disintegrating "background music" notion—music arising out of nowhere to underline, now and then, emotional moments, the principal forms film music has taken so far are the operetta form; the René Clair form consisting of drama with little dialogue and musical accompaniment; and what the author calls the intrinsically musical film, for which a satisfactory form has yet to be discovered, although some of the early Disney sound-cartoon films come very near formal perfection. Sound film requirements preclude continuous musical accompaniment. Detached numbers, however, need not be musically shapeless, as is shown by Hans Eisler's cycle-race music in the film *Kuhle-Wampe*.

Once questions of shape, length, and provision for eleventh-hour readjustments are settled, the far more complex problem of orchestral style has to be considered. Here, Dr. London gives advice based on many years of practical experience and clear thinking, with special reference to the new instruments devised by Sarnette and Sax in Paris and to questions—all very important—of mixed timbres, duplication, spacing, and writing for a chorus.

Further chapters deal with the achievements of composers of film music in various countries, the establishment of microphone academies, and the future of the sound film. In Dr. London's opinion, Great Britain to-day stands foremost among film-producing nations, owing partly to her wise policy in allowing distinguished foreigners to co-operate, and partly to the ability which composers such as Arthur Benjamin, Arthur Bliss, William Walton, Benjamin Britten and Walter Leigh have displayed in adjusting their thinking and technique to sound film conditions. Clarence Raybould's music for *Rising Tide* (1933) was one of the first works to show the right way during the early experimental period. The author calls attention to Karol Rathaus, Paul Dessau and Hans Eisler in pre-Nazi Germany; and to Honegger, Milhaud, Jaubert, Sauguet and Auric in France. He pays tribute to the pioneer work, in Italy, of Guiseppe Becce,

"the first to raise film music to the status of a definite concept." The artistic level of the American super films, he says, is far more notable for its visual than for its musical achievements; and far too little is known of Soviet productions for any assessment to be possible.

His main conclusions are: in the early period, sound films were regarded as substitutes for, and a mere mechanisation of, traditional forms of art. Progress will depend upon the ability of producers and composers to think in terms of a new dimension, to apprehend the needs of a new culture and new technical resources. Mechanisation here is only

partial. It eliminates the accidents of human performance; and, far from barring the way to advance in art, it may mean the coming of more numerous and more highly finished masterpieces. Meanwhile, film music is providing splendid opportunities for composers "endowed with technical facility and good taste rather than originality"—a wisely worded statement reminding us all that in the sound film—a fundamentally popular form of art, intended for a new generation of listeners, most of them not very experienced in matters musical—there is as yet little room for purely aesthetic experiments.

CINE TITLING SIMPLIFIED, by Harold B. Abbott. (Link House 2/-)

TRICK EFFECTS, by H. A. V. Bulleid. (Link House 2/-)

EXPOSING CINE FILM, by P. C. Smethurst. (Link House 2/-)

ALL amateur cinematographers are faced with the problems of exposure, most with those of titling, and a large number, at any rate, with those of trick effect. These three booklets should, therefore, have a wide application.

The differences between them are to some extent due to the nature of their subject-matter.

The problems of titling are comparatively simple and Mr. Abbott is, therefore, able to cover the whole ground at reasonable length.

Obviously, a short treatise on trick films cannot hope to deal with its subject in a similarly inclusive way. Mr. Bulleid meets this difficulty by dividing his subject into logical categories and giving a few simple examples from each in full, leaving the intelligent reader to create his own methods from the data thus provided. Clearly, trick work will never succeed except in the hands of those who are blessed both with technical abilities and considerable creative imagination. For these, this book should form a valuable starting-point.

Mr. Smethurst's book separates itself from the

other two not so much by the nature of his subject as by his treatment of it. He is a man with a mission. His mission is the preaching of a particular method—the "artificial high-light" method. I will not attempt to give here a condensed description of the method itself or of the arguments brought forward by Mr. Smethurst in support of it, in case my summary should do either the method or the arguments an injustice. The book contains, at any rate, much food for serious reflection on exposure problems. Whether, having pondered them, the reader will fully endorse the sub-title "Exposure difficulties solved" is another matter. Mr. Smethurst must expect to encounter a lot of other prophets and meet a good deal of unregeneracy among those to whom he preaches. For many, I fear, his world of Artificial High-Lights will remain one of those ideal worlds one glimpses in moments of exultation, only to return to the daily round of exposure-guessing, random use of exposure meters, and other petty vices.

H.D.W.

SUCCESSFUL FILM WRITING, by Seton Margrave (Methuen, 6s.)

Mr. Seton Margrave has compiled his book primarily for those who can write and have "ideas" for film stories and want to know, first, how to develop and decorate the "idea" so that the resultant film may appeal to the largest possible number of average filmgoers and, second, how to set out the story in film scenario form. But the book will be of interest, and perhaps of greater value, to those who have no ambition to write for the films but who want to see how one particular short story, *Sir Tristram Goes West* became the film *The Ghost Goes West*. The larger part of the book consists of a reprint of the story, the first film treatment of the story by Robert Sherwood and René Clair, and the "finished scenario" of

the film. The publishers on the dust cover describe the full length scenario as the "finished scenario, timed and measured ready for shooting." Neither Mr. Margrave nor Mr. Korda, who contributes an introduction to the book, makes this claim for the scenario and it would seem rather to be a description of the film when finished in scenario terms with film measurements by feet and frames. The difference is important. The would-be film writer may well despair of writing for an industry which is planned in advance down to the split second as well. The general reader may be led into assuming such exactness to be a characteristic of British film production. Such a finished scenario as is here presented is invaluable to a would-be professional

scenario writer and useful to those who want to read, and thereby recollect, the film in detail. For those who want to write for the films the first treatment and the principles of successful film writing as enunciated by Mr. Margrave should be sufficient provided that they realise that these "principles" are rather general conclusions based on rough observation of how the public has reacted

to the films which have been presented to it. After studying these "principles" one still wonders when Mr. Margrave decided to use *The Ghost Goes West* as his illustration—when he first heard that the film was in production or when it had been demonstrated at the Box Office that the film was, in fact, successful?

W. F.

ROMEO AND JULIET : Motion Picture Edition. (Arthur Barker, 8s. 6d.)

Those who are interested in the methods used in adapting Shakespeare for the screen and in the larger critical issues involved in such adaptations will find this book useful as a source of facts. It contains the First Folio edition of the play and the complete M.G.M. scenario; short essays by the producer—Irving Thalberg, the director—George Cukor, the writer of the scenario—Talbot Jennings,

the designers of the costumes—Oliver Messel and Adrian, and by Norma Shearer, Leslie Howard, and John Barrymore on the characters which they played in the film. The final section of the book is the guide to the study and appreciation of the film produced by M.G.M. for schools. The book is illustrated with a few stills from the film.

O.B.

TWENTY-FIVE YEARS OF FILMS, by G. R. Doyle (Mitre Press, 10s. 6d.)

It is impossible to give an idea of this book in any other words than the author's when he describes it as "reminiscences and reflections of a critic." Among them are scattered notes on hundreds of films which he has seen and a few on the nature and principles of cinematography. The book has the interest of a scrapbook and a gossip column but it is as irritating and tiring to read as both. The reproduction of notes and comments, which

were once topical, makes tedious reading, especially when little attempt has been made at co-ordinating them or relating them to present conditions. One wishes that the author could have selected and arranged his materials and let us know what he was getting at. The result would have been a less spontaneous but a more instructive, not to say more entertaining, book.

W. F.

SOVIET CINEMA, Edited by A. Arossev (published by Voks (Moscow) and obtainable in this country, price 3s. 6d.)

A book on the Soviet Cinema written in the main by Soviet film directors, critics, educationists, and publicists for the information of those outside the U.S.S.R. It is written in English and has been prepared and published by Voks, the Soviet Society for Cultural Relations with Other Countries. The following brief synopsis of the book, which is fully illustrated, will give some impression of its value to those who are interested in the Soviet cinema:—articles on development and ideology; biographical

notes on eighteen Soviet film directors; film production in White Russia, Ukraine, Armenia, etc.; newsreels and educational films; organisation of the industry and of the exhibition of films; notes on Soviet film art by leading Soviet directors and critics, and appreciations by a number of non-Soviet authorities, including André Gide, Cecil B. de Mille, Dr. de Feo, and, from England, Huntley Carter and Forsyth Hardy.

W.F.

FILM : A New French Magazine

SIGHT AND SOUND has now a counterpart in France, when in June last the first number of FILM was published, with M. M.-C. Lebrun, Director of the National Centre for Educational Research, as the General Secretary of the editorial board. This new bi-monthly magazine is to be devoted to all matters concerned with the educational and cultural factors of the film, wireless and gramophone. It will deal not only with the use of these mechanical aids in all branches of education but it hopes to serve the general public.

The first number is naturally mainly introductory, aims and purposes being explained and outlined, and it is interesting to notice how closely it follows the lines of the first issues of SIGHT AND SOUND. At the end is a supplement giving a series of bulletins

of films likely to be of use or of interest to the kind of readers that FILM hopes to attract. These bulletins are printed in the form of detachable labels so that they can be selected and arranged according to the reader's needs.

Like all new ventures its programme is ambitious. There is hardly a function which any of the three mechanical aids involved can perform for the community that has been overlooked in prospect and inspiring the whole enterprise is a desire to obtain for the French language and culture a visual and aural interpretation of which the whole nation can be proud. When such a venture is sponsored by M. M.-C. Lebrun there is every prospect of successful achievement.

F.W.

EDUCATION SECTION

FILMING THE AMAZON

By J. Blake Dalrymple

THE thought of sailing a thousand miles up the river Amazon to make a film of native life seemed to me the most thrilling adventure that any ordinary individual could encounter. But from the beginning of the trip, I encountered one difficulty after another, each tending to dissipate the idea that I was going on a holiday trip. First I had to have the Customs examine my film stock before shipment so that it could return to Britain free of duty. Many assurances of assistance for my venture were promised me by the local Brazilian Consul. It was therefore an unpleasant surprise to find, two days before my departure, that the same consul refused to visé my passport for some obscure technical reason. Twenty-four hours later, hours of uncertainty and feverish activity, I had my passport viséd—200 miles away.

After an uneventful trip of two weeks, I was in Pará—an autonomously governed state, with a modern city of the same name—encircled by almost unexplored jungle, and having communications only by water and air. Here I went to see the British Consul. He had never heard of me; the police had never heard of me; and the Customs had never been notified. Gone were all the promises held out in Glasgow and now the position was far from pleasant, for permission to land cameras and film might take weeks. Finally, I sailed from Pará two days later with an official permit, for filming only.

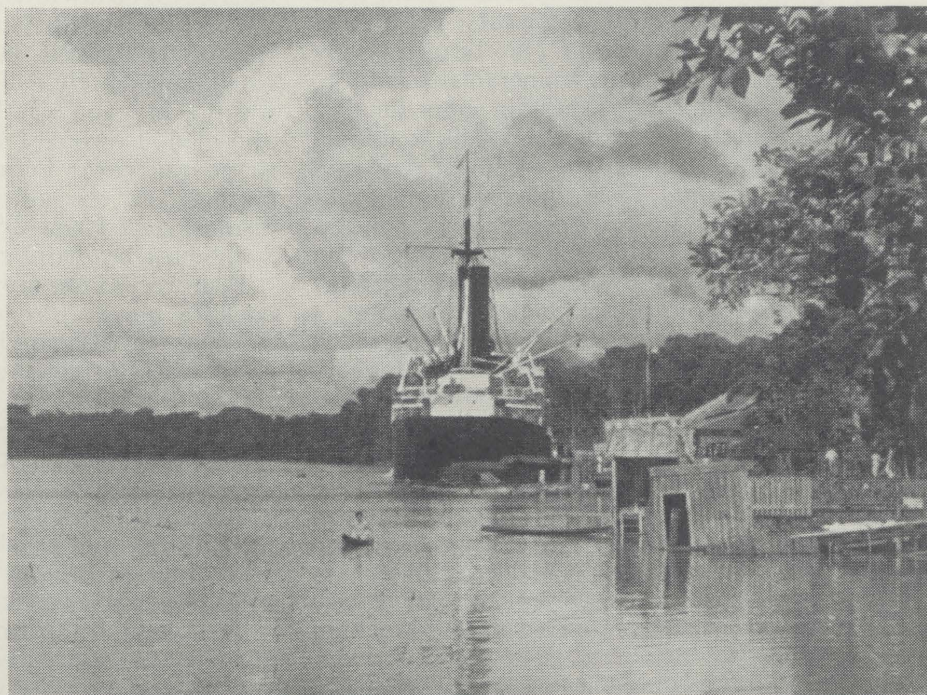
Sailing up through the great river delta with banks of dense, mysterious vegetation on either side two days of sweltering heat with sudden torrential downpours; queer native craft paddling into our wake from their thatched wooden huts perched on the riverside; offered great film material were it possible to land and "shoot."

At long last, it seemed, we woke up one morning to find our boat tied alongside the jungle bank. Gaudy blue butterflies flitted across our decks, while the oppressive heat of the jungle seeped out over the yellow, filthy water.

Here and there among the tangled, steamy undergrowth, bronze-skinned native labourers, clad only in long, ragged, once-white trousers and straw sombreros, sweated and strained at great heavy logs which they were tipping into the water. On rafts of timber or on solitary logs propelled only by their kicking feet, men were working at the loading of this awkward cargo into the hold of our boat. Swimming, with only their straw hats visible in the muddy water, or diving below to secure the hawser from the ship's derrick, these men toiled to provide us with the timber which was to find its way back to Britain for decorative work.

It was here that I had my first taste of the jungle—dark, foreboding, and above all, indescribably hot. Gone were the gay butterflies and, in their place, giant, black spiders, the size of one's fist, crawled about the undergrowth. Perspiration dropped in a steady stream, diffusing my vision and almost soaking the camera. The stay was not a long one, but it was far from pleasant, and I did not relish the idea of a week's trek under such conditions.

Filming in the Amazon district had always presented a difficulty, I had been informed, and I went prepared for it. There are always people who will tell you just what you want to know, and in



Loading timber from a sawmill
(Elder-Dalrymple Productions)



A native village inhabited by
sawmill workers

(Elder-Dalrymple Productions)

this case there was no scarcity of them. Photographs had been taken in that district repeatedly, and almost all were failures. And what was the reason for all this? I enquired. Oh! it was the climate. Somewhere high up in the heavens there is a layer of vapour which cuts out the valuable ultra-violet rays from the sun. Perhaps this is so, for even here, right on the equator, one does not require a hat, and sunstroke is almost unknown. So I had set out with a series of filters in an attempt to overcome this obstacle that Nature had placed in the way of cinematic Man.

The most interesting filters were a set which I had made up specially in varying graduations from clear glass below to the full value of the filter at the top. These, apart altogether from the beautiful sky effects, so beloved by some cameramen, tend to equalise the light and shade in certain shots, for with an overhead sun there must always be a certain amount of shadow, even on the brightest day, and always a blazing sky. These filters proved their value, for although the results are by no means outstanding, they certainly had some "kick" in them—that very quality which I had been informed it would be impossible to obtain in that region.

We visited a native village and I hired a porter to carry my equipment. We had not a word in common, but at the end of half a day that man could, I am sure, walk into any studio at Elstree and step into the director's shoes. We shot a scene, and if he thought I was not pleased—it had all to be done over again, no matter how much trouble it meant. It is my everlasting regret that I did not shoot ten times as much material here, but at this point, in my childish innocence, I really did believe the Brazilian Government intended to do something for me.

Seven days after leaving Pará we reached Manaus,

that unique city situated 1,000 miles from the river mouth.

I received a local permit to film, but my goings and comings between ship and shore were always accompanied by a bare-footed sailor armed with rifle and bayonet. I gave him my tripod to carry. It rained at Manaus—for five days it rained without ceasing—and then it changed to most glorious weather. Apart from the town itself, my principal interest was to show the loading of Brazil nuts from covered lighters into the hold of our boat. As this can only be done in dry weather, the rain which held me up, also prevented them from getting on with the nut loading, so that when it did turn clear, we started equal.

I was sorry to leave Manaus, but at the same time looked forward to the trip inland when I reached Pará on the return. Up till now the material had been of everyday interest, but once inland . . .

I arrived back at Pará and on leaving the protection of the British flag my equipment was confiscated immediately. Followed two weeks of inaction, waiting in vain for the release of my camera. I appealed, I swore, I threatened, I bribed, but all to no purpose. Permission must come from the Capital. At the end of a fortnight, disgusted and disillusioned, I flew 2,500 miles to Rio de Janeiro—"the most beautiful city in the world."

Four weeks later my cameras and film were handed back to me at Rio, and within two days I was *en route* for England—a sadly disillusioned, but nevertheless a very much wiser man.

Now it is over, and all that is left to mark those three months of varied interests is a two-reel film, **Sailing 1,000 miles up the River Amazon**. Introducing with diagrams the ocean crossing from Liverpool, it deals with Timber Loading, Riverside Towns, Native Craft and Dwellings, and finishes with a look into Manaus, where beautiful buildings abound, and from whose docks are loaded the nuts which come eventually to England by the same 7,000 ton liner that has navigated these 2,000 miles of difficult and mysterious waterways.

ELEMENTS OF SUB-STANDARD PROJECTION : SOUND PROJECTION

This is the second of a series of articles specially written for teachers by H. D. Waley, Technical Officer of the British Film Institute. Subsequent articles will deal with Normal running. Care of projectors and films; Projection emergencies.

IN picture projection a number of little still pictures are translated into one large moving picture. From the beginning to end of that process light is the medium made use of. In sound projection a more complicated sequence of events is involved, for little patterns on the film are translated into sound. This transmutation requires three stages; light, electrical impulses, sound-waves.

These three stages can be followed in Fig. III by glancing across the diagram from left to right. The lamp which produces the light is called an exciter lamp; the instrument which changes light into electricity is called a photo-electric (or P.E.) cell, and the more familiar instrument which changes electricity into sound is called a loud-speaker, and is seen on the extreme right.

The slit

It is necessary that the light which falls on and actuates the P.E. cell, after passing through the sound-track on the film, should have the form of a very narrow streak. On its narrowness depends the minuteness of detail of the sound, just as the detail of a figure depends on the fine point of the pencil used.

The production of this fine streak of light is achieved (Fig. IV) by building a slit between two metal edges into a little dust-proof cylinder, so that it shall not become clogged with stray particles, and projecting its image on to the cell by a projection system which in most essentials exactly resembles lantern-slide projection. It differs from it however in this, that the lenses are so arranged that the projected image is reduced instead of being enlarged.

The amplifiers

The electric impulses from the P.E. cell are too weak even to travel far without undue loss and they pass at once into a first amplifying valve (seen in

Fig. III enclosed in a square on the right side of the P.E. cell) which gives them enough strength to travel to a second amplification system (represented as three valves enclosed in an oblong) which raises them to the strength needed for working the loud-speaker.

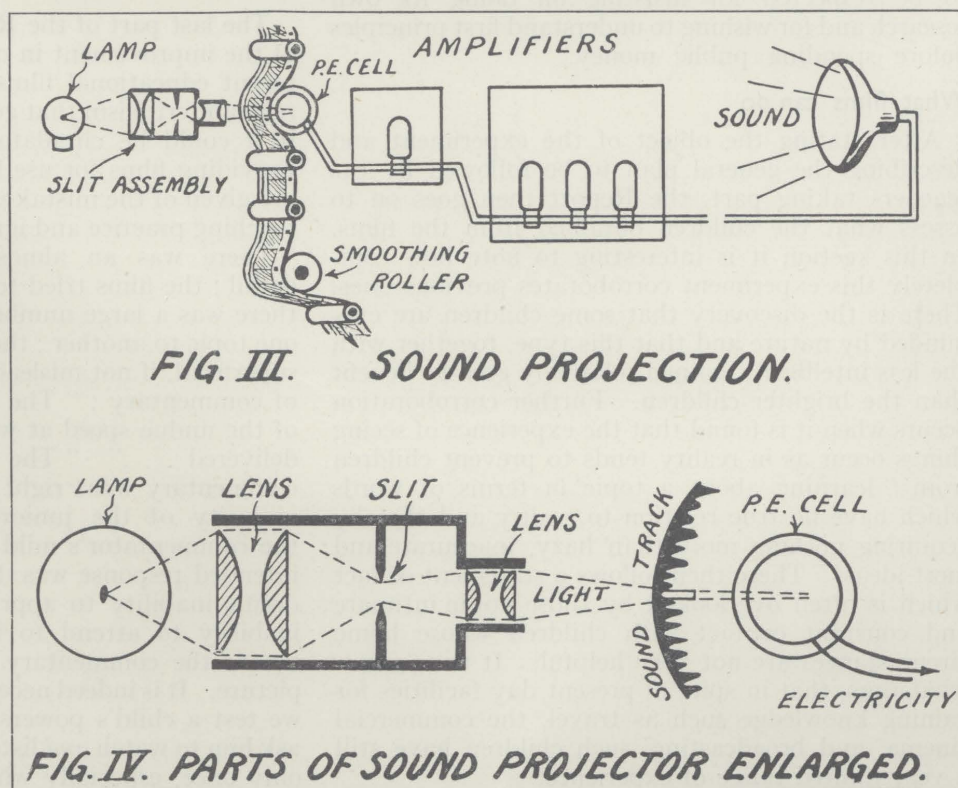
The loud-speaker

The loud-speaker is placed behind the screen, or at any rate as near it as possible, in order that the sound may come from the right direction, that of the picture. Amplifiers and loud-speakers are devices rendered familiar to us by their use in wireless sets.

Smoothing roller

This summary account of sound projection has however so far made no mention of a very important point—for true rendering of the sound-pattern it is, of course, essential that the film carrying it should pass across the light-beam with absolutely regular motion.

Fluttering movements of as little as one-tenthousandth of an inch can be detected by a sensitive ear as defective sound. The approximately regular movement imparted to the film when the bottom spool draws it off the bottom sprocket is therefore not absolute enough, and small irregular movements have to be damped out by passing the film against a "smoothing" roller, the rotation of which is kept regular by means of a fly-wheel. This roller is shown at the bottom of Fig. III.



FILMS FOR SCHOOLS

A summary of the Wolverhampton Report

THE number of Local Education Authorities which have set up special committees of enquiry on the film in education is steadily increasing. Wolverhampton must now be added to the list and its first interim report, published in September, although only based on one experiment, is such a workmanlike and sincere document that it deserves more than local publicity.

Any work undertaken by English people is conditioned by an innate tradition and conviction that one should never accept in its entirety another's experience nor take action on anything except the fruit of personal experiment: although such an attitude considerably retards the process of achievement, in compensation it inspires, however, a feeling of general satisfaction that at any rate the sanction of the community has been invited.

The work of the Wolverhampton Advisory Film Committee is not unfaithful to this tradition. It might be argued that much of what it has done had already been done elsewhere and did not need repetition, that most of the conclusions arrived at were already a commonplace of research and could have been borrowed and that its achievement to date, three films shown to each of 16 classes selected from eight of its schools, does not compare very favourably with what other municipalities have done in the matter. Nevertheless, Wolverhampton is to be respected for insisting on doing its own research and for wishing to understand first principles before spending public money.

What films can do

After stating the object of the experiment and describing the general plan to be followed by the teachers taking part, the Report then goes on to assess what the children obtained from the films. In this section it is interesting to note how completely this experiment corroborates previous ones. There is the discovery that some children are eye-minded by nature and that this type, together with the less intelligent, gained relatively greater benefit than the brighter children. Further corroboration occurs when it is found that the experience of seeing things occur as in reality tends to prevent children from "learning about a topic in terms of words which have no true relation to reality and thereby acquiring nothing more than hazy, inaccurate and inert ideas." There then follows a statement of fact which is often overlooked by those not in intimate and constant contact with children whose home circumstances are not very helpful. It runs somewhat thus, that in spite of present day facilities for gaining knowledge such as travel, the commercial cinema, and broadcasting, such children have still a very limited range of experience.

The next section deals with the teachers' part in the use of films, in which reference is made to the form and extent which preparatory work should take. Here it is reassuring to find that teachers are aware of their great besetting sin, which is to talk so much that they end in obtruding themselves between the children and the screen, forgetting that the use of films demands that the audience shall make their own private inferences and use their own intelligence in an endeavour to appreciate the real significance of the film's content. The Report then goes on to say that it is in the follow-up that the teachers make their major and indispensable contribution—"Here, supremely, is the teacher's part: to help children to remember with understanding what they have seen; to give to the visual images that the children retain, meaning and significance."

The following statement is also worth quoting: "There seems to be no necessity for concluding that the stimulating effect of such films will seriously decrease as the novelty of their use in school wears off. The stimulus was provided not so much by the novel circumstances surrounding the showing of the films as by the merit inherent in all films—their presentation of moving pictures," and, of course, the infinite variety of subject.

What films should not do

The last part of the Report contains appreciation of the improvement in quality that has occurred in recent educational films. It also includes so much relevant criticism that good purpose might be served if it could be circulated to the firms engaged in providing films for use in schools. Many instances are given of the mistakes due to lack of contact with teaching practice and ignorance of child psychology. "There was an almost embarrassing wealth of detail; the films tried to serve too many purposes; there was a large number of quick transitions from one topic to another; the unity of the films was only superficial, if not misleading." Then on the matter of commentary: "The main adverse criticism was of the undue speed at which the commentary was delivered . . ." "The occasional humour of the commentary went right over the heads of the vast majority of the juniors. . . ." "The failure of the commentator's mild facetiousness to secure the intended response was due, not merely to the children's inability to appreciate it, but also to their inability to attend to it. They often tended to ignore the commentary and to concentrate on the picture. It is indeed necessary to realise how severely we test a child's powers of concentration when we ask him to watch *and* listen to a film that is projected only once, especially when the sound is something

added to and not an integral part of the picture. It would be interesting if one could discover how far children are acquiring a habit—not consciously exercised—of simply not hearing the mechanically reproduced speech of the ordinary film and wireless set."

This is an extremely important point, although it is raised almost in parentheses, and it is one that is not sufficiently appreciated. For years now large numbers of people, both adult and adolescent, have been subjected to an unending spate of mechanical sound whenever they have sought either entertainment or edification in their leisure—the wireless switched on in the home and left on for hours for the sake of company, as it were; the cinema programme where not one moment's silence is allowed. May not the result be that this incessant sound is destroying the power of concentration and that when children meet more mechanical sound in film lessons at school they will automatically react to it as they do outside, and ignore it? If this is true, it provides an important argument for silent films.

Nor were the Wolverhampton children found to despise silent films because they were used to sound films in the commercial cinema. "It does not follow that children will tend, consciously or unconsciously, to make unfortunate comparisons between the films seen in the widely differing circumstances of the commercial cinema and the school. The teacher, if he is wise, never suggests that he is competing with the 'Western' or 'Silly Symphony.' His object is different, and the children react accordingly."

In the concluding paragraphs of the Report the experience gained is summed up for use in the next experiment which is to take place this term. Thus Wolverhampton plans its film scheme step by step. Its measure is pedestrian but so long as there is an inspired vision amongst its promoters the advance ultimately achieved may equal that of the other enterprises of the borough—slum clearance, road communication, industrial development—of which any city might be proud.

F. W.

TRAINING TEACHERS

OUT of the 200 teachers who attended the Bingley Vacation Course, arranged by the West Riding Local Education Authority, 80 chose "The technique of teaching with mechanical aids" as one of the three courses of study which they were required to attend. The "mechanical aids" involved were Wireless and Film and altogether six lecture demonstrations were given. A Radio Room and a Film Room were installed, the former, in charge of a B.B.C. engineer, being equipped with gramophone records of talks and the pamphlets applying to them. In the Film Room teachers were able to view a variety of silent films and to obtain some slight experience of the working of a silent projector. The course was conducted by Mr. G. T. Hankin, H.M.I.

At each lecture demonstration one record of a Radio talk was played and one talking film shown, followed by open discussion. In preference, however, to taking the subjects of the curriculum seriatim, which is the usual method at most educational courses, the method adopted was to bring before teachers the importance of thinking about some of the aims of education on the intellectual side before either praising or condemning the new mechanical aids. Thus, in the introductory lecture, radio and film were compared with textbooks and other aids, and it was shown that however competent the teacher might be, there are aspects of knowledge and experience to communicate which the radio and the film can express and interpret more efficiently and rapidly than the teacher. But, insofar as both broadcast talks and films are fixed in their content and, therefore, incapable of adaptation to the differing needs and moods of different classes, the teacher still remains during

the process of the lesson the essential and paramount factor.

The second lecture was devoted to demonstrating the extent to which radio and film can be used to train the mental powers of the child to receive new impressions accurately, assimilate them with previous knowledge and thus to develop further his powers of self-expression. Here, the necessity for "follow-up work" was stressed; these new aids provided so many impressions that selection was of especial importance.

A similar line of argument was followed in the next lecture dealing with the problem of laying the foundations of enduring knowledge. Expression work or individual work, in the library or art room, it was realised, must follow, but not without some preliminary suggestion from the teacher, if the child is to remember permanently certain facts or causal relations.

When radio and film were considered in connection with education as a medium for broadening experience, for the stimulation of sympathy, curiosity and imagination, the value of the new aids was more easily realised. The next lecture dealt with the needs for "training in appreciation" which is as necessary in broadcasting and the cinema as it is in literature, if standards of adult taste are to be improved.

Lastly, radio and film were considered as new methods of communication having implications for society which involved especially the danger of mass propaganda. It was suggested that in this country, where teachers are free agents, there should be constant experiment on their part so that a right relation between mechanical aids and the ideals of education can be continuously preserved.

NEW HISTORY FILMS

Reviewed by F. Wilkinson

FOR more than twenty years I have been a teacher of history in secondary schools. Like many of my kind, when films for use in the teaching of history began to appear in the catalogues, I used them all in their turn. Only one, made by the League of Nations Union, which was compacted mainly of shots from contemporary events, was really worth using. This had a definite theme, and presented its message effectively.

Except for this one film, I soon gave up using the films made for history teaching, and was losing hope when the French *Three Minute* films appeared on the commercial screen. Here was a new mode of illustrating history—the animated diagram and map—which not only combined the virtues of the atlas and black board, but also overcame what they lacked because of their static properties.

Naturally I hoped that one day an English firm would provide us with similar films based upon the history syllabus of our schools. I had not long to wait, for, eighteen months ago, the news was announced that Gaumont-British Instructional were contemplating six experimental films based on the diagram-map technique, which were to deal with phases of 19th century European history, intended for pupils in secondary schools studying this period in the year prior to School Certificate. The news became even more welcome when it was announced that the films were to be made in co-operation with teachers actually engaged in teaching this period, and specialists in the subject-matter.

The sponsors of the films are endeavouring to make each an example of a type. Every teacher engaged is being allowed to work out his own ideas. Some are interpolating among their diagrams actual scenes. Some are experimenting with symbols

and are stylising their illustrations. Others are attempting to improve the conventional commentary while others still are searching for new and improved methods of interpretation by moving diagrams.

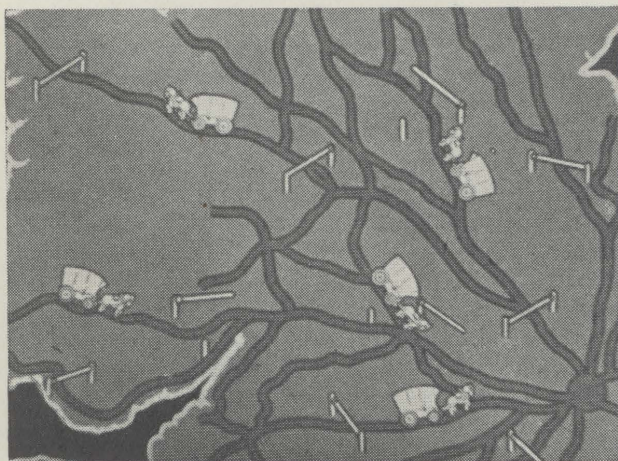
All the films are to be made either with spoken commentary or in a mute version for a silent projector.

The producer is Miss Mary Field, herself a teacher of history not many years ago, and the director, Mr. A. Miller Jones, who has many educational films to his credit. The diagrams and photography are by Mr. R. Jeffries, whose work is rapidly obtaining the reputation it deserves.

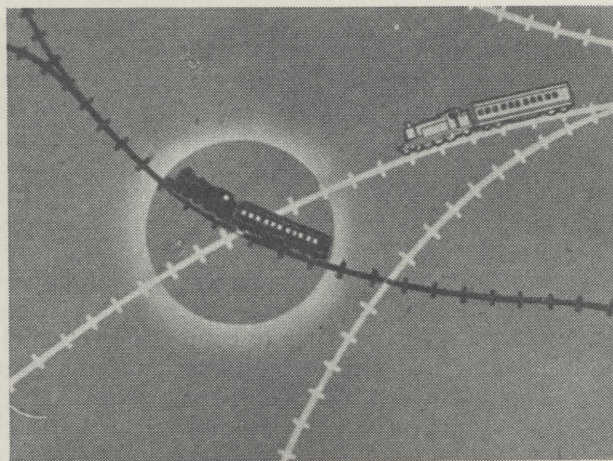
The first two films on the list are already issued and I have been able to use them both, and also to witness the demonstration lesson when they were shown to a class of secondary school boys at the British Film Institute's recent Film School.

The Development of English Railways is short and concise. There are no side issues. In fact it is so much to the point that in places it seems a little disjointed until it is realised that it concerns the railroads themselves and not the rolling stock. It begins with the causes of their origin and their somewhat disorganised spread. Then comes the resolving of the muddle by amalgamation and the film ends with diagrams showing the relative speeds of the stage coach, the first long-distance train and its descendant to-day. The story with which this film deals is a laborious experience when it has to be done with text-book, map and blackboard. In Mr. Boswell's film it becomes not so much history without tears as history without frustration!

In *The Expansion of Germany, 1870-1914*, Mr. Hampden Jackson had a difficult task. He had to select his facts and trace a development. At the



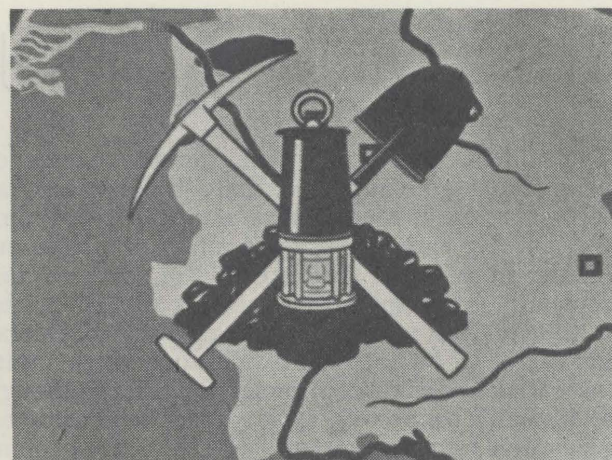
From *THE DEVELOPMENT OF ENGLISH RAILWAYS*



(G.B. Instructional)



From THE EXPANSION OF GERMANY 1870-1914



(G.B. Instructional)

same time there was the risk of political bias. It is quite astonishing to find that he has been reasonably just to Germany without offending English susceptibilities. At the end of the film, my boys realised the inexorable progress towards war which occurred during those years. They sensed the inevitability of it long before it came, and there happened what can never happen in a lecture lesson by reading a text-book: the film compelled them mentally to form judgments on each event as the film developed.

At the Film School certain critics felt that it might be over-stimulating, and that facts might thereby be given wrong values. But I think that the long interrogation of the boys in the demonstration class by the teachers assembled in the same room dispelled all fears of this kind. There were no facts that some one of the boys had not learned

and countless questions arise from the film. But what is more important is that all the main facts were remembered vividly by almost all the boys and are not likely to be soon forgotten because they were each attached to an emphatic visual image. If teachers want a film by which to test for themselves the value of such an aid in their teaching, this is pre-eminently the film to choose at present.

I very much hope that there will be a good response from the schools to these films. A new *genre* in teaching is being created by them, and most of the research necessary to establish it on the right lines must be done by the teachers in the classroom. Now that some are on the market, it remains for teachers to use and test them, and according to their experience send their criticisms to the company. By so doing they will ultimately get what they want.

FILM SUMMER SCHOOL

The Film Summer School, arranged by the British Film Institute in collaboration with the Educational Handwork Association, was attended by 72 full time students. The School was opened by Sir Henry Pelham, Permanent Secretary to the Board of Education. On the final afternoon a programme of films made by the students during the School was shown. Under the supervision of Mr. T. Baird and Mr. Stuart Legg nine short 16mm. silent films were produced in five sessions each of four hours. None of the films took more than four hours to plan and shoot and none took more than four hours to cut. The films included two films made at the Zoo, *Sea Lions and Penguins*; *Tower Bridge* and *Hampstead Fair*; two made at the Institute of Education, an experiment in chemistry and *Fire Safety*; and *Safety First*, a film made in Bloomsbury streets on how children should and should not behave in the streets.

Other outstanding features of the School were

the quality (and at times, the vehemence) of the discussions which followed the lectures and the amount of individual instruction on the manipulation of projection apparatus which was given. This was largely made possible by the full and generous assistance given by the companies marketing projection apparatus who provided demonstrators to assist the School's lectures as well as projectors which the students could use.

The following firms supplied apparatus and films for use at the School:—Agfa, British Instructional Films, Cinepro, Cinex, J. H. Dallmeyer, Educational and General Services, Ensign, Gaumont-British Equipments, Gaumont British Instructional, Kalee, Kodak, S.P. Equipments, S.S. Distributors, and Visual Education. The following film companies allowed parties of students to visit their studios: British and Dominion Film Corporation, Gainsborough Pictures, Gaumont-British Instructional, Gaumont-British Picture Corporation.

CHOOSING A PROJECTOR

It would be idle to maintain that the choice of a projector is a simple matter. There exists, at the present time, a perplexing multiplicity of film-sizes, and for each size a wide range of projectors of different make is marketed. Nor is there any simple rule-of-thumb which can be applied in the solution of this problem. A variety of considerations have to be taken into account which interweave with one another in such a way that, although not logically connected, they cannot be considered in isolation from each other. In the choice of film-size, the following questions all obtrude themselves simultaneously—price, library facilities, size of picture required, and safety regulations. When this set of problems has been worked out, the problem of selecting one make out of the many offered still remains, and again the question of price, picture-size, and, possibly, sound-volume crop up, together with the host of minor points in design which affect the range of a projector's performance and the ease with which it can be handled. Even when choice of a projector has been made there are still problems ahead—such as the choice of a screen and how to darken the room without excluding ventilation.

To deal comprehensively with these problems might well be considered beyond the scope of a short leaflet. The Institute believes, however, that it can at present serve educational authorities better by presenting the most necessary data to them in outline and keeping this outline well up-to-date than by compiling a massive and necessarily costly compendium full of facts which rapidly become obsolete. Accordingly, the Institute has recently, with the co-operation of the Sub-Standard Cinematograph Manufacturers' Association, undertaken complete revision of its Leaflet No. 5, which

aims at simplifying to the greatest possible extent the problems of choosing a school projector.

The leaflet contains :—

- (1) Survey of films available for each type of projector : 35 mm. silent ; 35 mm. sound ; 16 mm. silent ; 16 mm. sound ; 9.5 mm. and 8 mm. silent.
- (2) List of firms supplying projectors, with general price range for each type of projector from each firm.
- (3) Classified list, with prices of 16 mm. silent and 16 mm. sound projectors.
- (4) General considerations affecting the choice of a projector.
- (5) Safety regulations.
- (6) List of libraries supplying films for the various types of projector.
- (7) Screens.
- (8) Darkening and ventilation problems.

The classified list of projectors (heading 3) is a new and, it is believed, important feature of the revised leaflet. Its main object is to guard against the danger of buying a projector giving insufficient light to produce a properly lit picture of the size required. This list will be revised at least three times a year.

Sections 4, 5 and 8 are also new additions to the leaflet.

Various further details have been added to the list of libraries, such as hire charges, whether films can be bought outright, and which firms undertake the furnishing of complete shows on hire.

The library list also will be frequently revised and the Institute will always be glad to receive suggestions as to particulars, not at present included in Leaflet No. 5, which it might be desirable to include in future editions.

EDUCATIONAL FILM SHOWS

An interesting, and for teachers valuable, series of film programmes is being presented at the Tatler Theatre, Charing Cross Road, London, W.C.2, on Saturday mornings from 12 to 1 o'clock. The programmes consist of films made for educational purposes by G-B Instructional. Each programme consists of a number of films related to a central theme, as follows :—

October	17th :	Weather Conditions
October	24th :	Communications
October	31st :	The Country in Autumn
November	7th :	This was England
November	14th :	The Sea Shore
November	21st :	Scotland
November	28th :	Life Histories

Admission is at the usual Tatler Theatre prices.

G.P.O. FILMS ON TOUR

The G.P.O. Film Unit has four demonstration units on the road for the year 1936-37. Two of the units are 35 mm. sound and two are 16 mm. sound. With the collaboration of local education authorities programmes of G.P.O. films are being presented to schoolchildren at hundreds of schools throughout the country. Each unit stays for at least a week in each place visited and this has made it possible for programmes of films to be presented in the evenings to local film societies and to adult education and similar organisations in most of the cities and towns visited. The programmes are made up as follows :—

Weather Forecast.
 Post Haste or Savings Bank.
 Travelling Post Office or Night Mail.
 Granton Trawler or Spring on the Farm.
 Upstream or 6.30 Collection.

G.-B. INSTRUCTIONAL

G.-B. Instructional Films Bureau, Film House, Wardour Street, W.1, have issued an announcement regarding their films and projectors which is of great interest and importance, particularly to schools equipped with 16 mm. silent projectors.

Mute copies, for use on 16 mm. silent projectors, of 96 G.-B.I. films are being made, and 50 are already available. Since the films were made at sound speed (24 pictures per second) as compared with silent speed (16 pictures per second) teachers using these mute versions should adjust the speed of the silent projector so that the machine runs faster, and if possible at 24 pictures per second. These mute copies have no captions beyond those included in the sound copies. Film handbooks giving a full synopsis of the film, text of the original sound commentary and other useful information can be obtained.

Hiring charges for mute copies will be the same as those for sound copies (*i.e.* 5s. per reel per day, and 1s. per reel per day for each additional day up to a week). Mute copies of the films may also be bought by agreement at £7 per reel.

All new copies and new films added to the G.-B. I. Library are being printed in accordance with the S.M.P.E. specifications which have been adopted as the British standard specifications.

G.-B. I. films are now available for use on all 16 mm. machines at the same fees as those charged to users of G.-B. projectors.

While the change-over from the D.I.N. standard to the British standard is being effected, users of G.-B. projectors are being supplied with prisms which enable films on both standards to be shown.

Silent machines convertible to sound, designed to run at both silent and sound speeds, are now available at £57 10s. They may be adapted for sound at any time before January 1st, 1939.

CINE EQUIPMENTS LTD.

Cine Equipments Ltd., 35 Colmore Row, Birmingham 3, distribute the following 16 mm. silent films: **Glass Making**, a detailed description of the processes of making glass, from the mixing of the ingredients to cutting; **North Wales**, a tour covering sheep marketing, peat cutting, and slate quarrying. On hire at 3s. per reel per day, or sold at £6 10s. per reel.

MATHEMATICS

Mr. B. G. D. Salt, 5 Carlingford Road, Hampstead, London, N.W.3, distributes two short diagrammatic films on mathematics: **Equation $\ddot{X} + X = 0$** is available on 35 mm. and 16 mm. silent film and, from Pathescope, on 9.5 mm. silent film. **Euclid I. 32**, a proof of the theorem in animated diagrams, is on 16 mm. silent film. Hiring charges are nominal, and copies may be bought at £1 10s.

DRYAD HANDICRAFTS

Dryad Handicrafts Ltd., St. Nicholas Street, Leicester, are distributing a series of 16 mm. silent

EDUCATIONAL FILMS

films made by Dance-Kaufmann on the weaving of a waste-paper basket in pulp cane on a wooden base. The series consists of one 400 ft. reel on the whole process and loop film, each of about 15 ft. on the seventeen individual processes that make up the whole. The films are printed by a special process which allows them to be projected in semi-daylight so that children can watch the films while they are working. The 400 ft. film may be hired at 5s. per day or bought at £7 10s.; the loop films are for sale only, at 10s. each or £5 5s. for the set.

VISUAL EDUCATION

Visual Education Ltd., Temple Road, London, N.W.2, announce the following additions to their library of 16 mm. silent films: **Land of the Niles** and **Pilots of the Port of London**. They may be hired at 4s. per reel per day.

ENSIGN

Ensign Ltd., 88 High Holborn, London, W.C.1, announce the following additions to their library of 16 mm. silent films: **Geography**—**Kruger National Park**, **Zulu Native Life**, **New York**, **Life on a Cattle Station** (Australia), **Life among the Hills and Mountaineering** and **Life by the Sea** (Gt. Britain), **Crimea**, **Leningrad**, **Moscow**; and **Kangaroo Hunting** and **Elephant Trapping** and **The Queen Mary**. Hiring terms: account service, 4s. per reel per day; subscription service: from 1s. 3d. per reel per day.

BRITISH INSTRUCTIONAL FILMS

British Instructional Films Ltd., 84 Wardour Street, London, W.1, announce the following additions to their library of 16 mm. sound films: **Zoology**—**The Froth Blower**, the life of the Frog-hopper, **Phantoms**, the development and habits of the Phantom fly, **Two Pounder**, the life of the trout, and **Water Folk**, the life of the scavenging water-flea. On hire at 5s. per reel per day.

E.G.S.

Educational & General Services, Ltd. (for Cinema and Radio Supplies), 37 Golden Square, London, W.1, announce that 57 silent films, made in co-operation with the Glasgow Education Committee, are now available on hire to schools.

This series includes films on geography, natural history, domestic animals in their natural surroundings, farming operations, methods of transport, and industrial processes.

Other English films include a series of three, entitled, **The Earth in Space**.

E.G.S. will also distribute English 16 mm. silent versions of a number of films on geography made by Monsieur Jean Benoit Levy, general interest films from Sweden, diagrammatic films on general science and domestic science from Hungary, and English versions of various Ufa films on natural history subjects from Germany.

TECHNICAL SECTION

COLOUR CINEMATOGRAPHY

A Review by Dr. D. A. Spencer, President of the Royal Photographic Society

MAJOR KLEIN'S *Colour Cinematography* is the first important book to be published on the subject and, as such, is certain to receive an enthusiastic welcome. Reviewers will, I am sure, recommend it to all who want to make a broad survey of the various problems which colour cinematography presents. Taking it for granted, therefore, that you will buy this book if the subjects interest you at all, I think I shall be doing potential readers a better service if I indicate what seems to me to be its defects rather than list its contents. Before doing so, however, I should like to congratulate Major Klein on the energy he has shown in ferretting out from the scattered papers and patent specifications, which constitute the only available literature on the subject, the material here presented. It must have been a Herculean task.

Although a good deal of ink has been spilt on the subject of colour cinematography generally, the books that are of any real value to the student—or, for that matter, the practical worker—can be counted on one hand, and only in Wall's classical *History of Three-Colour Photography* is any serious attempt made to collect together available data on colour cinematography. Unfortunately, most of the work which has made the processes Wall describes into semi-practical commercial propositions has taken place since that writer's death and, in the most valuable part of Major Klein's book, information on available processes is brought up-to-date.

Unfortunately, like Wall himself, Major Klein seems to possess certain blind spots which demand that his estimate of the future of any particular process should not necessarily be taken at its face value nor, for that matter, should my criticisms, since opinions on the technical and aesthetic aspect of colour processes must, because of the youth of the industry, be founded quite as much on "hunches" as on experimental data or reliable information.

As a reader new to the subject proceeds through this book he must inevitably gather the impression that the only system of colour cinematography likely to have more than a transient success is a subtractive one in which the colouring matter is already present in the film when it is exposed. This is a very proper belief for Major Klein to hold, because he is a technical director of Gasparcolor—the only commercial system of this type—but his natural bias must be allowed for.

By presenting the material gathered together in this book with a shift of emphasis, an equally plausible and equally misleading case can be made

out for those additive systems of which the author says in his preface, "it is likely that all the work lavished on them was wasted." An absolutely impartial book on such a controversial subject is perhaps too much to expect, but, unfortunately, the author is not content with strewing his descriptions of additive systems with perfectly proper warning notices. Statements such as:—

"The principal disadvantage of additive processes is that it is always necessary to substitute . . . a special lens unit for projection" (p. 115),

are unnecessarily misleading and, in the case of additive Dufaycolor, untrue.

Having apparently eliminated from serious consideration all processes except Technicolor and those of the Gasparcolor type, Major Klein then hands a bouquet to Dr. Kalmus which, on close examination, is found to smell of raspberry canes.

The non-technical cinemagoer will probably accept the argument since it fits in with his own experience. Thus, he has seen more of Technicolor than any other process. Moreover, in Disney's *Silly Symphonies* he has seen this process in its most controllable form. He may even be aware that this is so, and therefore have wondered what a three-colour Technicolor made under less sympathetic conditions of lighting and exposure would be like. The advertisements spoke highly both of *Becky Sharp* and *The Trail of the Lonesome Pine* and yet when they came they did not "ring the bell" in England at all events, and so he is conditioned to accept the rest of the author's thesis. And yet anyone conversant with the problems involved knows that whatever the public reaction to these two films, they were technical triumphs beside which the difficulties in colouring a cartoon are child's play, and the reason for their comparative failure at the box office is more probably to be found in pages VIII and IX of the preface rather than on p. 193—in our present ignorance as to how colour should be handled rather than in the quality of Technicolor colouring.

The data on such problems collected in Chapter 8 are, as the author points out, little more than "generalisations which have a guidance value". While, for example, it may be true that certain colours may be used to suggest certain moods, the mood induced is by no means universal and, from the producers' point of view, the information is of little more value than clichés about the desirability of goodwill in international relations. A yellow which to some may suggest the dawn of hope may recall to others the curate's egg; the royal yellow of the Mandarin is also the colour of the

lemon. Indeed, no work of art can deliberately be constructed by the application of formal rules and since more knowledge as to the psychological reactions which follow the presentation of colour combinations in a time sequence is badly required, a case could be made out to show that the next logical step from the colour cartoon should be to colour the news reel rather than films such as *Becky Sharp*.

In a news reel, aesthetic considerations have only a rudimentary importance because the news itself is the important thing. During the time that the cartoon develops from the *Playbox Annual* effects of *Old King Cole* to a real colour symphony, the colour news film and documentary might be used to provide reliable data on what Klein calls our "physiologico-psychological" reactions to films in which the unifying harmony imposed by monochrome presentation is absent and so help to solve the colour producers' problem and give colour enthusiasts something else to talk about beside diads and triads. But the topical colour news reel is a field which additive processes may easily have to themselves, and it is therefore an irresistible temptation to adopt Major Klein's own technique and attempt to show that an additive process of his "almost extinct" type may in fact have more promising prospects than the systems favoured by the author.

I am not even remotely connected with the Francita process which has been developed in France, but taking the description as given by Major Klein, it appears to have the following advantages:—

1. The cost of the negative and positive stock is the same as for black and white;
2. The film is processed by the familiar black and white technique;
3. The colour rendering, being by the additive system, will be more nearly truthful than any subtractive system.

None of the above very important advantages are possessed by any subtractive system.

Then there are the disadvantages:

1. Being an additive system, it will require considerably more light in projection than normal black and white or any subtractive system;
2. It requires an attachment to the projector;
3. Two lenses are used in making the negative record and, therefore, it is probable that parallax will be present or, if avoided, that the optical system will only produce sharp images over a limited range of distances;
4. The part images on the film are less than half the normal size and a greater degree of enlargement, with consequent loss of definition, will occur on projection.

On these grounds, according to the author, Francita must join the ranks of the "extinct" processes—but must it?

In granting that, at the moment, the lighting equipment of the average projector is only just

adequate to project black and white, we should not ignore the fact that new types of high pressure mercury vapour lamps are capable of producing as much white light as any additive system will require, from a tube little larger than a lipstick, and that such lights may easily become standard projection equipment for other reasons within the next few years.

The work of Dowell, of Adam Hilger, Ltd., quoted in the text, appears to have overcome the drawbacks of multiple lens systems on the camera in an entirely satisfactory manner.

As regards the cost of fitting projectors with special attachments, it should be remembered that a feature film is estimated to cost at least £18,000 more if made in subtractive three-colour than in black and white. On the assumption, therefore, that one of the big corporations which owns a chain of theatres were to shoulder the cost of fitting the projectors, they could offset this first cost against the fact that their colour film would be made with the advantages (1) and (2) above, and that in the long run they would be able to undertake production at an overall cost considerably nearer to black and white than would be possible with subtractive systems.

As regards definition from the small image, each of these images will be critically sharp on the film, a condition which does not arise in any bi-pack system, or in Gasparcolor. One at least of the images in the latter processes is recorded through a fog of emulsion grains, and its definition may therefore suffer to an extent which may easily be more noticeable on projection than that due to the extra enlargement required by Francita.

Most of these points can be found in Major Klein's book, but it requires a considerable acquaintance with the subject to realise that this is the case.

Equally good cases can be made out for Dufaycolor and lenticular processes.

Looking beyond the next few experimental years, it would seem, therefore, on the basis of the evidence at present available, that there are as good grounds for backing an additive as a subtractive process, although there are considerable difficulties to overcome before either system will be completely satisfactory. These difficulties differ in kind rather than degree, and in ten years' time it is just as likely that subtractive cine systems will have gone the way of the cylindrical phonograph as that the additive systems will be extinct.

There are a number of minor mistakes in the book which will require to be corrected in future editions. Inasmuch, however, as the book will give to enquiring laymen some idea of the magnitude of the problems solved and to be solved; to the research worker a host of useful references; and will warn the speculator to look before he leaps, I consider the publication of this irritating yet stimulating book to be welcome and its defects perhaps no greater than those normal to such pioneering efforts.

FILM AND TELEVISION

By H. D. Waley

THE Film and Television impinge on one another at four or five different points which have very little logical relationship with one another, and therefore any attempt to discuss these points of contact must necessarily be somewhat discursive.

First, at the sending end of television, film may be used as a step in the process of transforming the scene to be televised into the necessary series of electric signals. This process is called "Intermediate Film Scanning".

Secondly, also at the sending end, an existing film may be used for the purpose of supplying visual raw material in a convenient form for the purposes of the programme-builder. This is called "Telecine Scanning".

Thirdly, at the receiving end of television, film may be used as a step in the process of transforming into a picture the electric signals received. This is called "Intermediate Film Reception" and is the exact converse of "Intermediate Film Scanning".

Fourthly and fifthly, again at the receiving end, the television screen, whatever its contents, is considered as a possible rival by two quite distinct sections of that very complex entity—the Film Trade. The Home-Movie section of the trade fears the coming of the small television screen and the Cinema Theatre section fear the coming of the large television screen.

To return to the first point of contact—"Intermediate Film Scanning"—the apparatus for this is illustrated on this page. High up in the centre of the photograph may be seen what is in all essentials an ordinary film camera. The film is exposed in the usual way in this camera and in a sound-camera below it. The latent images of picture and sound-track are developed and fixed rapidly, and then fed past their respective scanning apertures for transmission. The illustration shows very clearly the parts of the apparatus concerned with picture-scanning. On the extreme left is an arc lamp, the light source for the scanning process. In front of that stands a large white tank through which the film is fed past the scanning beam while still wet. From the top of the tank projects a lens which concentrates the beam on to the scanning disc after it has passed through the film. On the right of this is seen the case in which the scanning disc and its motor run *in vacuo*. Perched on the motor casing is a rectangular box containing the photo cell which translates the light modulations into current modulations. The film scanning disc has its holes arranged in a circle instead of the usual spiral, because the motion of the film, which is fed past the scanning slit continuously, provides the necessary vertical component in the track of the beam.

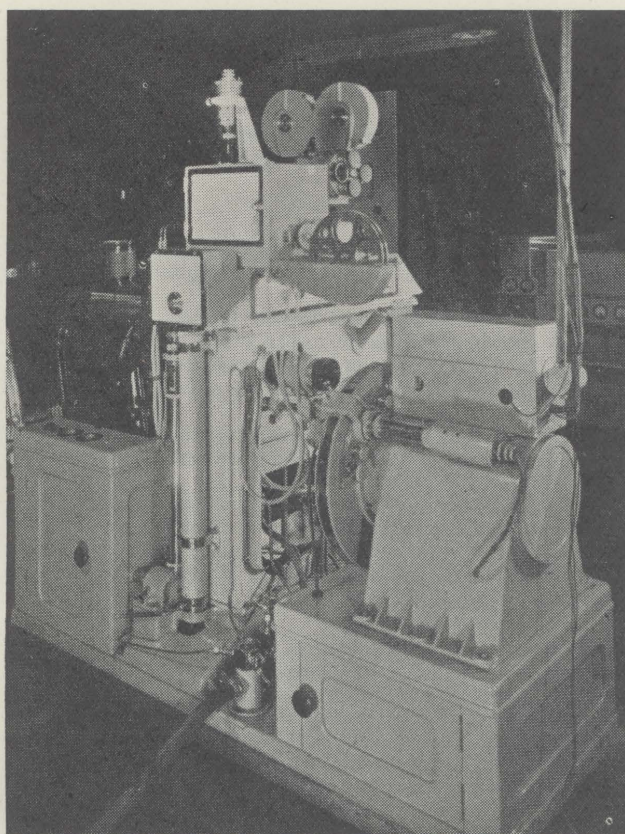
The scanning of the sound track follows the normal practice, since the essence of sound film reproduction is, in any case, the translation of a string of photographic signals into a series of electric signals.

In order to appreciate the technical considerations which brought intermediate film scanning into being, it is necessary to take a glance at the general problems involved in television scanning.

Scanning might be defined as the analysing of rectangular blocks of visual data into narrow strips, which, in turn, are translated by photo cells into a succession of electric signals. If the block of visual data consists of a few bold shapes, such as the head and shoulders of a performer, placed close to the scanning apparatus, then the process can be carried out successfully by the spotlight method, that is to say, by steering a beam of light to and fro across the performer's contours by passing it through a spirally perforated disc, and putting banks of photo-electric cells where they will catch the reflections of this beam.

Such a method is clearly quite inapplicable to outdoor scenes already flooded in daylight, or even to indoor scenes spread out over a considerable distance. The obvious instrument which offers assistance at this point is the photographic lens, providing as it does a nice compact little replica of visual facts, however distant. But the problem of scanning a photographic image is complicated by the fact that even the best lenses now available do not provide images bright enough to work a photo-electric cell when they have been dissected into about 80,000 fragments. Unfortunately, one cannot illuminate an image as one illuminates an object, by simply throwing light from a lamp direct on to it. The problem, therefore, resolves itself into one of amplification of the light energy latent in the lens-produced image. Intermediate film solves this problem by giving physical substance to the image. The object thus produced, the film, can, like any other object, be lit up by a powerful light (in this case, the scanning arc lamp) which raises its energy output to the necessary level.

This combination of material image and mechanical scanning was the first solution of outdoor and distance-scanning problems to reach a practical point. Recently, however, purely electrical methods of scanning a lens-produced image have made great strides. These are all in essence cathode-ray tubes of highly specialised design. In outward appearance, they somewhat resemble old-fashioned studio portrait cameras, and are quite as portable, except for the fact that the camera is tethered by a cable with a maximum length of about 1,000 ft. to its time-base generating and amplifying system, which is at present rather bulky. The rivalry of electrical



Baird High Definition Television Intermediate Film Scanner

scanning may ultimately reduce the utility of intermediate film-scanning to a single point, the fact that it produces a record which can be used again. This point is, however, an important one. It is necessary that any entertainment system should be able to reproduce during the average man's leisure hours events which may have taken place during his working day. Moreover, any sort of creative television involves the necessity of combining in a single item material selected from the widest possible variety of sources. Perhaps, the films made in the course of television will become the national records of the future.

In fact, it is possible that it will be found expedient to add to the electric-scanning cameras secondary apparatus for recording in the form of film the signals sent back to the transmission apparatus. Otherwise, the electrical scanning camera will bestow on television consciousness only, as it were, without memory.

Incidentally, it may be noted that this storage process of televised pictures could, in theory, be as easily accomplished by making grooves on discs as by making photographs on film. In practice, of course, the film is the most convenient method of storing visual data.

It is this fact which accounts for the importance of the film in the second case which we have to consider—its use as a programme builder. The film here

plays a rôle analogous with that of gramophone records and readings aloud from literature in radio programme building. The experience recently gained by public reception of televised films at Radiolympia suggests that the best results will be obtained from films specially produced—or at least specially edited—for television purposes.

Thirdly, there is the intermediate film as a technical aid to large screen reception. This method has been further developed in Germany than in this country. Like intermediate film scanning of distant objects, it was the earliest method of large screen reception to become practical. It would, however, involve picture theatres in most unwelcome additions to their already sufficiently complicated and expensive apparatus.

The theatre owners are nervous that television may involve them, as the sound film did, in an all-round rise in capital and current expenditure. This fear is, perhaps, not quite groundless. But the fears of those who deal in home projection apparatus that it may be superseded by the home television receiver seem unnecessary. The home projector is likely to continue being associated with the home camera as an extremely personal recording outfit, while the school projector will always be valuable for its flexibility of use even when the school radio possesses its accompanying vision screen as a matter of course.

STANDARDISATION OF 16 mm. SOUND FILM

At the meeting at Budapest on the 4th September of the International Standards Association, the following nations agreed to adhere to the S.M.P.E. standard specification for 16 mm. sound film:—Austria, Belgium, Czecho-Slovakia, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Holland, Hungary, Italy, Japan, Norway, Poland, Roumania, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, and Russia.

STANDARDS COMMITTEE FOR THE FILM INDUSTRY

Since the adoption of the S.M.P.E. standard by this country, which followed the arbitration of last March, a Film Committee has been formed under the auspices of the British Standards Institution for the consideration of all standardisation problems affecting the Film Industry. The Committee consists of representatives appointed by the following bodies:—

Federation of British Industries (Film Producers' Group	...	...	...	...	4
Cinematograph Exhibitors' Association	...	...	...	...	4
British Kinematograph Society	...	...	...	...	3
Kinematograph Renters' Society	...	...	...	...	2
Incorporated Association of Kinematograph Manufacturers	...	...	...	...	2
Associated Photographic Film Manufacturers	...	...	...	...	2
Sub-Standard Cinematograph Manufacturers' Association	...	...	...	...	2
British Sub-Standard Sound Association	...	...	...	...	2

TECHNICAL JOURNALS

Notes on articles of special interest which have been published in various technical journals, not generally available in this country, will now form a regular feature of *Sight and Sound*. Readers of *Sight and Sound* who wish to read the articles may do so at the offices of the Institute. It is not possible to lend the journals.

S.M.P.E. Journal

July. Progress during 1935 includes notes on colour (Kodachrome, Technicolor), silent cameras, mercury arcs, Pola screens, multi-cellular-horn loud-speakers, high amperage projection carbons.

Mr. John K. Hilliard, of M.G.M. Studios, analyses the performance required for theatre loud-speakers and describes the Shearer two-way horn system. Mr. Hilliard and Mr. K. R. Kimball, in a joint paper, discuss the design of dividing networks for use in coupling power amplifiers to loud-speaker systems.

Mr. R. H. Draeger discusses the technique of small scale photographic reproduction of documents, and Mr. T. R. Schellenberg, of the National Archives, Washington, discusses its applications.

Under New Apparatus, Mr. H. Griffin, of the International Projector Corporation, describes a special projector for rear-projection effects in the studio. Mr. J. Frank, Junr., of R.C.A., describes High-Fidelity sound reproducing equipment. Mr. M. F. Collins, of R.C.A., describes a 35 mm. to 16 mm. sound-film reduction printer. Mr. J. R. Manheimer describes a Thyatron Reactor system of theatre lighting control, and Mr. T. R. Barrabee describes Foto Fade, a chemical and dye mixture for positive fades.

August. The Report of the Projection Screen Brightness Committee deals with the average density of release prints. Two questions are asked and answered:—

(1) Could release prints be more transparent without loss of quality?—No.

(2) If they were denser, would improved picture quality on the screen result?—Slightly.

A comparison is made between the average screen illumination at present available (about 11 foot-candles) and that which tests indicate as desirable from the point of view of the audience (about 40 foot-candles). It is suggested that temporary screen brightness limits of 7 to 14 foot-lamberts (*i.e.*, 9-18 foot-candles with a diffusing screen) might be recommended.

In discussion, the opinion was offered that screen brightness in different theatres in U.S.A. varies by as much as from 2-25.

Report of the Committee on Preservation of Film.—A 12-point programme is outlined and a preliminary report given.

Report of the Committee on Non-Theatrical Equipment.—It is stated that the rapid development of 16 mm. sound film makes it difficult to keep up-to-date. It is suggested that the S.M.P.E. might usefully draw up a model ordinance for the guidance of local authorities who are drawing up safety regulations. These at present vary widely—for example, in Jacksonville, Fla., the owner of any projector with a capacity exceeding 500 watts is liable to \$100 fine for showing pictures in his own home unless he has taken out a \$16 licence.

Progress in the use of films for education is noticed, the formation of the American Film Institute being warmly welcomed. It is noted that there are 22 museums maintaining an extensive film service, the largest being that of the New York Museum of Natural History. Individual school libraries are being built up in a number of centres.

It is proposed that a standard screen intensity of 6 foot-candles be recommended for 16 mm. projection on reflective screens, and 10 foot-candles on matte white screens.

Mr. G. L. Dimmick, of R.C.A., described the improved results in sound recording and printing obtained by the use of ultra-violet light.

Mr. T. D. Cunningham, of R.C.A., outlines the primary considerations in the design and production of theatre amplifiers.

Baron M. Von Ardenne, of Berlin, describes a new high-vacuum cathode-ray tube for use in sound recording.

Mr. F. H. Conant, of the Mass. Institute of Technology, describes the use of cartoon work in the teaching of electrical phenomena.

Mr. C. M. Koon, of the Office of Education, Washington, discusses the Federal Government's interest in educational films.

Mr. R. W. Winton, of the Amateur Ciné League, N.Y., describes that body's organisation and purposes.

Messrs. S. E. Sheppard, P. T. Newsome, and S. S. Sweet, of the Eastman-Kodak Co., discuss physical tests of the strength of film stock.

September. Mr. D. B. Joy, of the National Carbon Co., describes a new 13.6 mm. super-high-intensity carbon. Mr. W. C. Kalb, of the National Carbon Co., describes the increasing use of high-intensity arcs for theatre projection, studio lighting, and studio background projection.

Messrs. R. E. Farnham and R. E. Worstell, of the G.E.C. Cleveland, discuss the colour quality of incandescent lamps.

Mr. D. P. Loye, of Electrical Research Projects, sets out the acoustic considerations to be borne in mind by those constructing and using sound stages.

Mr. H. F. Olson, of R.C.A., describes the construction and use of unidirectional microphones.

Mr. Burton F. Miller, of Warner Bros., details the research into the causes of harmonic distortion in variable density recording.

Mr. G. A. Morton, of R.C.A., describes the construction and theory of electron-image cathode-ray tube.

Under New Apparatus, Mr. J. R. Smith, of the Westinghouse Co., describes recent developments in copper-oxide rectifiers for arc supply.

Moviemakers

July. Mr. J. F. Holdan writes on the elements of light filtering and draws some practical conclusions.

August. Earl Theison writes on the construction of miniature sets.

September. Earl Theison describes the technique of studio rear projection.

Ralph Barnes writes on the use of the cinema camera in the study of industrial fatigue.

Filmtechnik

July 13th. Dr. Oswald Bender, of Berlin, discusses technical considerations governing the making of copies from lenticular films.

Under "Technical Cinematography," the timing cameras used in the Olympic Games are described and illustrated.

July 31st. A. Von Barsy, of Rotterdam, writes on three fundamental types of studio lighting.

The Siemens-Perutz Opticolor system of copy-making from lenticular film is described.

August 22nd. The lenticular film used for the Opticolor process is described.

The open-air cinema installed during the Olympic Games Week is described and illustrated.

The Reichpost travelling intermediate-film television scanner is described and illustrated.

WHAT THE BRITISH FILM INSTITUTE IS DOING

WORK OF THE QUARTER

Annual General Meeting

AT the Third Annual General Meeting of the Institute, held on October 8th, 1936, the Duke of Sutherland, who, on his appointment as High Steward, had asked to be relieved of his duties as a Governor of the Institute, was elected President of the Institute. Lady Levita, Dr. Benjamin Gregory, and Mr. J. J. Lawson, M.P., did not offer themselves for re-election as Governors representing public interests, and the Hon. Eleanor Plumer, Professor W. Lyon Blease, and Captain Sir William Brass, M.P., were elected to the vacant positions. Sir Charles Cleland was elected Chairman of the Governors for the year 1936-37 by the Governors.

Membership

On November 1st, 1936, there were 662 full members of the Institute, as compared with 495 at the same date last year.

National Film Library Catalogue

The publication of the National Film Library Catalogue* is the most important event of the last quarter. The Catalogue gives a complete list of all films presented to the National Film Library for preservation since its inception, and of the films available on loan.

In the former, the films have been broadly classified and, wherever possible, the date, country, production details of the film have been given; in many cases, a description is added. In the latter, the films have been arranged in subject order and the contents have been described in full. The Catalogue also gives a list of other acquisitions of the National Film Library, which include a considerable number of books, early programmes and some early apparatus.

A number of interesting additions have been made to the Library during the quarter. Foremost among them is a collection of 11 films presented by Mr. Adrian Brunel. They include *Bookworms*, *The Bump*, *Crossing the Great Sagrada*, *Cut it Out*, *£5 Reward*, *Twice Two*, and *Typical Budget*, a series of burlesque comedies designed as a departure from the type of screen comedy common about 1920, when they were produced. The films were made by Minerva Films, Ltd., the directors of which included A. A. Milne, Leslie Howard, Aubrey Smith, Adrian Brunel, Nigel Playfair, C. F. Power, and Lionel Phillips; the stories were written by A. A. Milne and directed by Adrian Brunel. Other films given by Mr. Brunel are *The Shimmy Sheik*, and

Two Chinned Chow, both produced in Germany and the only two living silhouette films shown in England; and *The Man Without Desire*, produced in Britain in 1922, and the first British film to be featured at the Tivoli Theatre, London. He also gave a film called *Vormittagspuk*, an abstract film by Hans Richter.

16mm. copies of *Hoboken to Hollywood* (America, 1918), a slapstick comedy, and *Evolution of a Butterfly* and *The Spider*, two early educational films, have been presented by Mr. Harry Price. Mr. Price has also given the Library a 16 mm. negative print of the G.B. news-reel of the Firewalking Experiment arranged for the University of London Council for Psychical Investigation at Carshalton, on the 17th September, 1935. Other news-reels have been given by Mr. A. J. Pomroy. They include *Levee at St. James Palace* (1911), *The Opening of Parliament by King George V* (1912). Mr. David Carson has given a copy of the news-reel of the visit of King George V to Glasgow in 1927.

Future historians will appreciate the collection of 15 political films used in the General Elections of 1931 and 1935 on the Conservative Party's Cinema Vans. They have been presented to the National Film Library by British Films, who made them for the Conservative Party Organisation. The speeches by Mr. Baldwin, Mr. Ramsay MacDonald, Sir John Simon, and the Agriculture film introducing Mr. Walter Elliot, should be of the highest importance.

The Loan Section, use of which is confined to full members of the Institute, has been increased by prints (both 35 and 16 mm.) of a number of films in the Preservation Section. These are all set out in an off-print of the Loan Section from the complete Catalogue. A copy of the off-print may be had on application to the Librarian.

In the Provinces

Spontaneous movements to form local branches of the Institute in Cardiff and Colwyn Bay may result in the formation of a Welsh Film Council. Local committees have been formed in both places, initial public meetings have been held, at which the Hon. Eleanor Plumer and the General Manager of the Institute spoke, and considerable public interest has been aroused.

The General Manager of the Institute has also discussed the formation of a Film Council with the organisers of the film societies which are being formed at Doncaster and Bradford, and with the committee, which is considering the formation of a branch of the Institute at York. Schemes for a

*Catalogue of the National Film Library, 1s. 2d. post free.

Film Council are being prepared by the Merseyside and Manchester branches of the Institute. The object of the Film Councils will be to co-ordinate the activities of all kinds of societies interested in the cinema, such as film societies, amateur cine clubs, and teachers' film groups, and to promote and assist in the formation of such societies where they do not at present exist.

At the first meeting called by the Notts Education Committee, Joint Advisory Committee of Teachers and Members of the Education Committee, the Assistant General Manager of the Institute spoke on the use of films in schools and presented a programme of educational films. A similar lecture and demonstration was given at a week-end school for headmasters and headmistresses of senior schools organised by the Northumberland Education Committee.

A Novel Performance

A further sign of the increasingly cordial relations that are growing up between the trade and the Institute was afforded by a special film show given by the Governors of the Curzon Kinema, Brighton, on Friday evening, October 30th. The directors offered them the theatre for a weekday evening in order that the Institute might put on a programme of films not generally seen except at

the specialist cinemas in London and at film society performances. The programme, which was designed to illustrate the early days of the cinema and its scope and variety to-day, was entitled, *Films—Now and Then*. The first half was composed of a selection from the National Film Library's collection of early news reels, dramas, and comedies. The second half included such items as a teaching film, a scientific film, a documentary film, a colour abstract film, a puppet film, and a cartoon. Six hundred people were present by invitation, and judging by the appreciative reception given to the programme and to the announcement that, given public support, regular programmes of unusual films, in place of the ordinary programme, might be arranged, similar experiments would be welcomed in other parts of the country if other exhibitors would put on similar shows.

Post Filled

The Merseyside Film Institute Society has supplied another manager for a news theatre. Mr. P. W. Dennis, an assistant secretary of the Society, has been appointed manager of the news theatre in Leeds, controlled by Times Theatres, Ltd. Mr. Cyril Ray, a former assistant secretary, was appointed last year by the same company to be the manager of the Tatler News Theatre in Manchester.

B.F.I. BRANCHES

Branches of the British Film Institute, known as Film Institute Societies, exist to promote the objects of the Institute. Demonstrations of films and the publication of local film guides are activities of most of the societies. Further branches are to be formed next season and those interested in this work are invited to write to the General Manager of the Institute.

BECONTREE AND DISTRICT, Hon. Sec.: R. Gillion, Dagenham Adult Institute, St. George's Road, Dagenham, Essex.

16 mm. film shows have been arranged for a large number of local societies. A series of lectures has been arranged for October and November. Lecturers: Paul Rotha, Stuart Legg, Arthur Elton, Basil Wright, John Grierson, Andrew Buchanan, Thomas Baird, and Mary Field. It is intended to establish an amateur production unit in January, 1937.

BRIGHTON, HOVE AND DISTRICT, Hon. Sec.: C. Walker, "Eskdale," Old Shoreham Road, Southwick, Sussex.

In conjunction with the Hove Amateur Cine Society, this branch is taking part in the showing of the film "Morning Shadows" at Hove on October 15th.

Also, in conjunction with the Governors of the Film Institute, an exhibition of "Films Now and Then" took place at the Curzon Kinema on Friday evening, October 23rd.

Arrangements have been made for the showing during November and December of 16 mm. educational, documentary and other interesting films.

LONDON FILM INSTITUTE SOCIETY, Hon. Sec.: Miss Olwen Vaughan, c/o British Film Institute, 4, Great Russell Street, London, W.C.1.

Sunday film performances will form a regular part of the Society's activities. The object of these is to enable members to see again films which when they were shown were important and interesting and to show new documentary and experimental films. Arrangements are being made for members to attend lectures by well-known film technicians and for 16 mm. film programmes on weekday evenings. The London Film Guide is being published each month.

MANCHESTER AND DISTRICT, Hon. Sec.: J. D. Sinclair, 716, Chester Road, Stretford, Lancs.

Permission has now been obtained from the Watch Committee to hold Sunday shows for members only. The first of these will take place on November 8th and one a month will be given during the winter. Lectures and shows of 16 mm. film will also be given, beginning on October 28th.

MERSEYSIDE, Hon. Sec.: J. A. Parker, 5 and 6, Bluecoat Chambers, School Lane, Liverpool, 1.

The Society's fourth season opened on October 5th with Mr. Bruce Woolfe's talk on the Double Feature Programme.

The following lectures have been arranged for the 1936-37 season: October 30th, Norman Hulbert, M.P., on "The Production and Exhibition of News Films"; November 18th, Ingram Knowles, on "Films and Peace"; December 7th, Basil Wright; January 21st, Cyril Ray on "The Other Side of the Box Office"; February 17th, Alberto Cavalcanti; March 23rd, Stuart Legg; April 26th, Oliver Bell.

Four private film shows have been arranged for October, November, March and April, at the David Lewis Theatre, which has recently been equipped with modern sound apparatus. The films selected include *Merlusse, Tetched in the Head* (an American Colour Cartoon), *Der Zerbrochene Krug* (Austria), *Mail* (U.S.S.R.), *The Little Chimney Sweep* (Lotte Reiniger), and *Janosik* (Czecho-Slovakia).

The Amateur Film Unit has arranged a programme of three nights in October, November and December.

NORTHERN IRELAND, Hon. Sec.: W. H. Welply, O.B.E., Cooleen, Greenisland, Co. Antrim.

Arrangements are being made for special film shows both 35 mm. and 16 mm. Programmes will include continental, documentary and educational films.

SCOTLAND

SCOTTISH FILM COUNCIL, Joint Hon. Secs. : C. A. Oakley, 188, Hyndland Road, Glasgow, W.2, and Stanley L. Russell, 14, Kelvin Drive, Glasgow.

The Council held what was probably the most important meeting in its career following the General Meeting on Saturday, October 10th. The future policy of the Council was discussed. General satisfaction was expressed at the continued success of each of the Council's constituent sections, but there was a feeling that the Council's activities were growing at such a rate that they could no longer be carried on by honorary officers. The appointment of a paid official in September, 1937, was suggested.

The circulation of the Council's Monthly Bulletin grew during its past year of publication from 4,500 to 6,900. The increase shows roughly how many new members were enrolled by Scottish cinema societies and associations during the season.

The Council's most important work at present is in connection with the viewing scheme for educational films. Some of the viewing committees are already at work. The scheme will be described in detail in a coming issue of *SIGHT AND SOUND*. A joint meeting between the Council's Chairman's Committee and representatives of the Scottish Council for Research in Education and of the Scottish Educational Film Association has been held in connection with the questionnaires to be used in the scheme.

The Amateur Cine Panel has completed the preliminary arrangements for the Scottish Amateur Film Festival. It will be held in the Lyric Theatre, Glasgow, on Saturday, February 20th. The adjudicator will be Mr. Anthony Asquith.

The Social Service Panel has arranged a demonstration of Keep Fit films in Glasgow.

A series of matinees of films of particular interest to women is being arranged at the Monseigneur Cinema, Edinburgh, by the National Union of Women.

A new film society has been formed in Stirlingshire and a branch of the Scottish Educational Film Association has been established in Aberdeen.

SCOTTISH EDUCATIONAL FILM ASSOCIATION, Hon. Sec. : A. Inglis, 25, Tynwald Avenue, Burnside, Rutherglen.

Special Matinees—In Glasgow, it is hoped to hold two matinees before Christmas, each to be held in four theatres. In the first *Sequoia* will be the leading feature and, for the second, *Scrooge*. In Edinburgh, two circuits have been arranged, one for three dates in October at different theatres and one for dates in January and February. The first includes News Reel, *Black Beauty*, *Snow Speed*, *Krakatoa*, and Cartoon; the second, News Reel, *Silver Tip*, *Snow Hounds*, *Harmonious Moments*, *Day Awakens Norway*, and Cartoon.

Demonstrations—The Winter Syllabus of the Glasgow Branch gives prominence to the needs of those engaged in experimental production. Commander Hunt will give advice on the making of a scenario. Joint meetings will be held with the Western Sections interested in science and physical training when films dealing with these subjects will be criticised. Other interesting items are an Experimental Group Evening, a Public Lecture by Mr. John Grierson and a Demonstration Lesson by Mr. D. B. Duncanson.

An interesting programme has been prepared by the Edinburgh Branch, including a talk on Russia, illustrated by films showing life in U.S.S.R.; an exhibition of Paul Burnford's "Moods of Nature" and *Cement*, which received the premier award at the Scottish Film Festival.

Lanarkshire and Ayrshire Branches have planned a comprehensive series of local demonstrations so that teachers in outlying districts may have opportunities of appreciating the value of the educational film.

Tuition Classes—The success of last session's tuition classes has ensured their continuance in Glasgow and

Lanarkshire, while other branches are making arrangements to give instruction in the manipulation of the projector.

Experimental groups in Glasgow and Lanarkshire are engaged on several film projects. Study groups have been formed in connection with all the branches for reviewing educational films. Everything points to important developments during 1936-27.

AYRSHIRE FILM SOCIETY, Hon. Sec. : J. A. Paton Walker, 5, St. Marnock Street, Kilmarnock.

Second Season—It is hoped that the membership this year will be between 200 and 250. Eight Sunday meetings have been planned, the programmes for which will be selected from the following films: France, *La Bandera*, *Bonne Chance*, *Merlusse*, *Marchand d'Amour*, *Remous*, *Le Rosier de Mme. Husson*, *Zero de Conduite*; Great Britain, *Don Quixote*; Germany, *Das Madchen Johanna*, *M Refugees*; Czecho-Slovakia, *Hey Rup*; Switzerland, *Die Ewige Maske*; U.S.S.R., *Three Songs of Lenin*.

DUNDEE AND ST. ANDREW'S FILM SOCIETY, Hon. Sec. : G. Edwin Geddes, Scotswood, Wormit.

Five Sunday performances have been arranged at which the following features films, supported by documentary, educational, and experimental films, will be shown: *Episode*, *Marchand d'Amour*, *Bonne Chance*, *Turksib*, *Merlusse*, *Student of Prague*. Lectures by Mr. John Grierson and Miss M. Locket are being arranged. Two exhibitions of 16 mm. films are to be given in the School of Economics.

EDINBURGH FILM GUILD, Hon. Sec. : Douglas A. Donald, 16, Great Queen Street, Edinburgh, 3.

Sunday Performances—The films to be shown this season will be selected from: *Marchand d'Amour*, *Merlusse*, *The Robber Symphony*, *Die Ewige Maske*, *Bonne Chance*, *The Turn of the Tide*, *The Old King and the Young King*, *Der Schimmelreiter*, *De Kribbebijter*, *The Student of Prague*, *Crime et Chatiment*, and *The Unfinished Symphony*. Revival of notable films of the past are also being considered. Among these are *Don Quixote*, *Maedchen in Uniform*, *Blue Angel*, and *Three-Cornered Moon*. Documentary, experimental and cartoon productions will be a feature of all programmes. It is also hoped to arrange for the exhibition of special groups of films dealing with a particular subject, on the lines of the successful "Colour" programme presented last season. After each Sunday performance an informal meeting will be held in the Caledonian Hotel. Guests at these meetings will include notable experts, critics, and film personalities, who will address the gathering. Professor Talbot Rice will preside. It has also been arranged to hold discussion meetings, on the Wednesday after each show, at the Guild's Club Room. This year the Bulletin, published by the Guild, is to be enlarged and will contain more general information in addition to reviews of current films, together with a full annotated programme of the Sunday performances prepared by Forsyth Hardy.

GLASGOW FILM SOCIETY OF, Hon. Sec. : D. Paterson Walker, 127, St. Vincent Street, Glasgow, C.2.

Eighth Season—A new feature this season will be the separation of the Society's Repertory Programme from its ordinary programme, a scheme which enables members to subscribe to the latter only, if they wish. On October 4th, *M* was shown; October 11th, *Bonne Chance*, *Mont St. Michel*, *La Belle au Bois Dormant*, and *Gentlemen in Crowns and Gentlemen in Top Hats*; November 1st, *Student of Prague*. **Future Programmes**—November 8th (first Repertory Programme), *Once in a Lifetime*; November 15th, Address by Miss M. Locket; November 22nd, *Marchand d'Amour*; December 13th, *Merlusse*; December 22nd, Second Repertory Meeting; January 10th, *Die Ewige Maske*.

Amateur Film Festival

The last date for entries for the fourth Scottish Amateur Film Festival is 31st December, 1936; films must be sent in by 31st January, 1937; adjudication and public show will be held on 20th February at the Lyric Theatre, Glasgow. The adjudicator will be the Hon. Anthony Asquith. Entries are divided into three main classes:— (a) Fiction, open. (b) Non-fiction (documentary and instructional), open. (c) Any type of film made by amateurs resident in Scotland. There are also prizes for best colour film and for the best sound film in any class, and further prizes in each class for novices. The Victor Saville Trophy will be awarded for the most outstanding film. There are no restrictions as to length or width.

The Festival is organised by the Scottish Film Council, Amateur Cinematography Panel, and full particulars may be obtained from Ian S. Ross, 80 Buchanan Street, Glasgow, C.1.

FILM SOCIETIES

BILLINGHAM, Hon. Sec. : H. S. Coles, 3, Cambridge Terrace Norton-on-Tees, Co. Durham.

In conjunction with the Billingham Picture House, a week of repertory was arranged in September, which included, *Cavalcade*, *The 39 Steps*, *The Thin Man* and *Ruggles of Red Gap*. Seven dates have been fixed for special shows on week-day evenings during the present season, at each of which there will be two performances. At the first of these the programme included *The Birth of the Robot*, *Night Mail*, *The Band Concert*, and *The Day of the Great Adventure*. It is hoped to arrange for a Film Bulletin service during the season.

BIRMINGHAM, Hon. Sec. : Mrs. R. C. Knight, 60, Hagley Road, Birmingham, 16.

Seventh Season. Owing to his appointment as Regius Professor of Greek at Oxford, Professor E. R. Dodds has had to resign his Chairmanship of the Society. Professor Sargent Florence has been elected to succeed him. The first meeting of the season was held at the Scala Cinema, Smallbrook Street, on Sunday October 18th. The programme included *Marchand d'Amour*, *Magie du Fer-Blanc*, *Sea Urchin*, *Rainbow Dance*, *The Convict's Daughter*. The fiftieth meeting of the Society will be held on November 8th and the programme is to be *Merlusse*, *Fairy of the Phone*, and a surprise programme collected and compered by Stanley Hawes, former secretary of the Society. On December 13th, *Bonne Chance*, *L'Hippocampe*, *Gentlemen in Top Hats* and *Gentlemen in Crowns*, will be shown. The Committee is also arranging a series of talks, discussions and shows of films on sub-standard stock throughout the season.

CHILDREN'S FILM SOCIETY, Hon. Sec. : Miss C. W. Harley, Everyman Cinema Theatre, Hampstead, London, N.W.3.

Third Season: Six Saturday matinees have been arranged. Each programme will contain, in addition to Children's News Bulletin of Current Events, Nature Films, Fun Films and Coloured Disney Cartoons, a film from a specially planned series of films grouped under three headings:—

1. How the world's work is done: (*Night Mail*: *Shipyards*, *Men and Meters*, *Industrial Britain*, *Coal Face*, *Making a Car*.)
2. How people live in other lands: (*Kroo the Savage*, *Quaint Holland*, *Sea Change*, *Russia To-Day*, *Manhattan*, *Grey Owl*, *Secrets of India*.)
3. Modern Heroes: this series will include stories of real adventure in *Hunting*, *Flying*, *Exploring*, and *Climbing*.

Another new feature will be discussion in the theatre after one of the films.

COLNE LITERARY AND SCIENTIFIC SOCIETY, Hon. Sec. : C. Hargreaves, "Greystones," Colne, Lancs.

On October 14th, the programme included a topical, *Great Gable*, *Cock of the Walk*, *Episode*. On November

Scenario Competition

OUTLOOK, the Scottish monthly magazine, offers prizes of £7 7s. and £3 3s. for scenarios for a sound film not exceeding two reels on any of the following subjects:—

The Death of a Nation. The decline of Scottish national well-being as illustrated by George Malcolm Thomson's book, *Scotland: that Distressed Area*.

The Waste Land. The Highlands as they are and what they could become.

Pride and Poverty. Scotland's heritage and few remaining graces contrasted with present miseries and despoilation.

The Competition will be judged by the Editor, Mr. Norman Wilson, and Mr. John Grierson.

Entries must be sent in by 1st January, 1937, and must be typewritten on one side of the page only, and be accompanied by the proper entry form. The entry form is contained in the October issue of **OUTLOOK**.

11 and December 16th, the feature films will be *Janosik* and *Barcarole*, respectively. The Committee will also show documentary films of the type of *Shipyards* to illustrate developments in this branch of cinema work.

ETON COLLEGE, Sec. : W. W. Williams, The Old Christopher, Eton College, Windsor.

On October 10th, this Society's 18th programme was shown, consisting of *Nursery Island*, two versions of the G.-B. Newsreel takes of the Installation of the Provost of Eton, (a) the uncut original in full without sound-track, (b) the cut and finished version as shown to the public, *The March of Time*, and *Jack Ahoy*.

FILM SOCIETY, LONDON, Sec. : Miss Barbara Frey, 56 Manchester Street, W.1.

Film programmes will be presented on November 22nd, December 13th, January 10th, January 31st, February 21st, March 14th, April 11th, and May 2nd.

FRIENDS' HALL AND WALTHAMSTOW SETTLEMENT, Hon. Sec. : S. Birchby, Friends' Hall, Greenleaf Road, Walthamstow, E.17.

The season opened on October 3rd, when a public showing was given of *Man of Aran*, *Wild Game Sanctuary* and *Town Settlement*. Further public shows have been arranged for November 7th, December 5th, January 16th, February 13th, and March 13th. On January 16th Mr. William Farr will introduce and comper a programme of pre-war films from the National Film Library of the British Film Institute. A proposal has been made that a cine club should be formed out of the membership of the Society and all interested persons are invited to communicate with the secretary.

HULL FILM ART CLUB, Hon. Sec. : Miss Hannchen M. Drasdo, 14, Westbourne Avenue, Hull.

Six meetings have been arranged at which the following films will be shown:—*Shadow and Silhouette* films by Lotte Reiniger, *The White Hell of Pitz Palu*, *Pickwick Papers*, *Blackmail*, and *Death Ray*; also, if it can be arranged, *Thunder Over Mexico*.

LEICESTER, Hon. Sec. : E. Irving Richards, Vaughan College, Leicester.

Sixth Season. The following programmes have been arranged:—October 24th, *Merlusse*, *Colour on the Thames* and *Bird Sanctuary*; September 19th, *Earthworm*, *Gentlemen in Top Hats* and *Gentlemen in Crowns*, *Birth of a Robot*, *Soap Bubbles* were shown. Subsequent programmes will be selected from *Crime et Chatiment*, *Die Ewige Maske*, *The Brothers Karamazov*, *The Day of the Great Adventure*, *De Kribbijter*, *Ivan*, *Pescados*, *Liebesmelodie*, *Bonne Chance*, and *Aerograd*. At each exhibition, shorter items of general interest will be shown, including documentary, abstract and experimental films, cartoons and the latest examples of work in colour.

MANCHESTER AND SALFORD WORKERS', Hon. Sec. : 86, Hulton Street, Salford, 5.

Eight Sunday film displays have been arranged. The following films have been shown:—September 20th, *Peace of Britain*, *Ship of the Ether*, *Sea Urchin*, *Dinner Hour*, *Jazz Comedy*; October 18th, *World War and After*, *Birth of a Robot*, *Joie de Vivre*, *Housing Problems*, *Blow, Bugles, Blow*. The following films will be shown:—November 15th, *Coal Face*, *Port of Five Seas*, *Der Hauptman von Koenenick or Remous*; December 13th, *Bed and Sofa*, or *The Deserter*.

NORTH LONDON, Hon. Sec. : H. A. Green, 8, King's Road, London, N.4.

Six Sunday performances have been arranged. Programmes to be selected from—*We of Kronstad*, *The New Gulliver*, *A Simple Case*, *What is the World ? En Stilla Firt*, *Gosta Berling*, *L'Atlante*, *Avodah*, and *Nanook of the North*.

Lectures have been arranged by Alistair Cooke, Arthur Elton and Robert Flaherty.

OXFORD, Hon. Sec. : E. F. Bowtell, 105, Victoria Road, Oxford

Five Sunday meetings have been arranged:—October 18th, *Battleship Potemkin*, *The Voice of Britain*, *Joie de Vivre*; November 1st, *Le Loup Garou*, *Night Mail*, *Ali Baba*; November 15th, *Bonne Chance*, *Song of Ceylon*; November 29th, *Marchand d'Amour*, *Shipyards*, *Disney Cartoon*; December 19th, *Blackmail*, *Weather Forecast*.

SOUTHAMPTON, Hon. General Secretary and Treasurer: J. S. Fairfax-Jones, 10 Golden Square, London, W.1. Hon. Southampton Secretaries: D. A. Yeoman, Mrs. D. Tyerman, 16 Ascupart House, Portswood, Southampton. Hon. Winchester Secretary: Miss Ruth Keyser, 12 St. Swithin Street,

Winchester. Hon. Student Secretaries: Miss Silsby, Mr. G. Abrams, University College, Southampton.

Now entering its sixth season, the Society has a large and increasing membership. It gives six performances on Sunday afternoons at the Picture House, Southampton. There is a branch organisation at Winchester for the recruitment of members and another at University College, Southampton. The first performance of the season will be held on 8th November when the programme will consist of *Bonne Chance*, *Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves*, *Workers and Jobs* and *Gentlemen in Top Hats* and *Gentlemen in Crowns*.

TYNESIDE, Hon. Sec. : M. C. Pottinger, c/o The Literary and Philosophical Society, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, 1.

Four Sunday programmes have been arranged:—October 11th, *Student of Prague*, *Night Mail*, *Birth of the Robot*, *Arabia and Islam*, *Lumière film*; November 1st, *En Natt*, *Eriskay*, *Crossing the Great Sagrada*, *Diet and Nutrition*, *The Great Train Robbery*; November 22nd, *Bonne Chance*, *Great Cargoes*, *Abyssinia*, *Marcus Lycinius*; December 13th, *Episode*, *Mediaeval Village*, *Dawn to Dawn*, *Simple Charity*.

On the Tuesday following each exhibition, a discussion will take place in the Club-room. It is hoped to arrange lectures by well-known experts. Exhibitions of stills are also in contemplation. Plans are being prepared for morning shows of selected films for children.

WOLVERHAMPTON, Hon. Sec. : E. L. Packer, Himley Crescent, Goldthorn Park, Wolverhampton.

Seven meetings will be held. On October 7th, *Don Quixote* and *Wings over Everest* were shown. On November 2nd, *Battleship Potemkin* was shown.

RELIGIOUS FILM SOCIETIES

CINEMA CHRISTIAN COUNCIL, Sec. : T. H. Baxter, Gwydir Chambers, 104, High Holborn, London, W.C.1.

The Cinema Christian Council has commenced the winter season with an unusual number of enquiries, some from overseas, all betokening a growing interest in the use of religious films. Associated members are being enrolled. The first quarterly informative paper was issued with the September issue of the Monthly Film Bulletin of the British Film Institute which is now sent to all associated members.

The Leicester Cinema Christian Council, at their September meeting, discussed their future work and policy after an address by Mr. Baxter.

MISSIONARY FILM COMMITTEE, Sec. : T. H. Baxter, Gwydir Chambers, 104, High Holborn, London, W.C.1.

The Missionary Film Committee have produced two new films, a short interest film of Burma, and a feature film, *Kamalam*, a story of village life in the Telugu country of India. The prologue, a glimpse into the life of William Carey, was "shot" at the G.B. Instructional Studio. The film itself was photographed by the Rev. W. LeCato Edwards, a missionary at Hyderabad, and, with the exception of the music and recording, was produced entirely by non-professionals. It is a remarkable achievement and has had a first run of a month at the Polytechnic Theatre. In addition, the Missionary Film Committee are road-showing their other films, and are booking up to capacity their 16 mm. editions for the churches.

RELIGIOUS FILM SOCIETY, Gen. Sec. : The Rev. Stanley W. Edwards, Gwydir Chambers, 104, High Holborn, London, W.C.1.

The Religious Film Society have this winter set out upon a campaign for giving 2,000 free demonstrations of films

of a distinctively religious nature. The purpose of these demonstrations is to introduce to churches not familiar with this new form of Christian propaganda the very best type of films that are at present available. The showings are carried out in conjunction with two religious newspapers.

The film programmes are opened by the Hymn, "Praise my soul the King of Heaven" and the Lord's Prayer, and include the films *Barabbas*, *The Ancient City of Canterbury*, and *The Common Round*. The campaign is well in hand and from every Church, at which showings have already been given, letters of appreciation and encouragement have been received.

CATHOLIC TRUTH SOCIETY, Hon. Sec. : Miss J. O'Sullivan, Catholic Film Society, 36, Great Smith Street, London, S.W.1.

Attractive programmes for the schools have been compiled from the selected films in the Catholic Truth Society Film Catalogue. They are 1½ to 2 hours long and C.F.S. Projection Units are available from 6 p.m. onwards.

The monthly displays were resumed at Millicent Fawcett Hall on the first Wednesday in September, when the Rev. Dom Wilfrid Upson, O.S.B., gave a film-lecture entitled, "A Parish Priest and his Ciné Camera." Fr. Upson's film might well be described as a Catholic News Reel. Catholic amateur cinematographers are invited by the C.F.S. to submit films of Catholic news interest for private viewing by the Society's experts, with the object of discovering if co-operation in a periodic Catholic News Reel could be arranged.

On Wednesday, Friday and Saturday, November 4th, 6th and 7th, the C.F.S. shows its films at the Millicent Fawcett Hall, Westminster. The shows will be at 8 p.m., with an additional afternoon display on Saturday.

One of the most interesting performances will include the Society's latest film, *Aran of the Saints*, a story of Catholic life in the West of Ireland, which will be preceded by a talk by Fr. Gilby, O.P.

Hitherto, excepting for the monthly displays in Westminster, the C.F.S. has relied upon bookings from parish priests, Catholic clubs, schools, convents, etc. Independent suburban displays have now been arranged at various Town Halls, beginning with Lewisham Town Hall on Wednesday, November 24th. Forest Gate, Ilford and Battersea will follow.

The New Mime Group is starting a weekly evening class in Mime, open to non-members, at the Interval Club, Dean Street, Soho, the pupils of which will ultimately enact Mimes for filming. Full particulars may be had from the Hon. Secretary.

AMATEUR CINE CLUBS

Anyone wishing to join an Amateur Cine Club is invited to write to SIGHT AND SOUND for particulars of the clubs in his or her district. The British Film Institute has full particulars of 80 Amateur Cine Clubs in Great Britain.

ACE MOVIES, Hon. Sec. : Eric G. Notley, 90, High Street Mews, Belvedere Grove, Wimbledon, S.W.

The Club has recently moved into new premises at Wimbledon and is engaged on the production of a Marionette film. It is proposed to hold a public show of this, and other films which may be made during the Winter, next Spring.

BALHAM AMATEUR CINE SOCIETY, Hon. Sec. : A. F. Durell, 52, Melrose Avenue, Mitcham, Surrey.

This Society is engaged on the completion of *The Strange Case of Dr. Rintelin*.

BECKENHAM CINE SOCIETY, Hon. Sec. : J. W. Mantle, 56, Croydon Road, Beckenham, Kent.

The Society has three films in production and holds meetings twice weekly. Arrangements have been made for the Society to visit other Societies in London, and many of these will return the visit.

CARDIFF AMATEUR CINE SOCIETY, Hon. Sec. : R. E. Coath, F.C.P.A., 54, Park Place, Cardiff.

First Season. Work just commencing on two indoor productions.

ELTHAM CINE SOCIETY, Hon. Sec. : F. Rainbow, 7, Spearman Street, Woolwich, S.E.18.

Recent films have included *Public Health Service*, a documentary showing the work of a Public Health Department, *England's Rough Edges*, a mood study in natural colour, and *Microcosmos*, an unusual story film. *Microcosmos* and other films were publicly shown at the Arcade Hall, Eltham. Winter season programme includes revival of a number of silent classics, commencing with *Lost World* famous for its trick photography. Projection evenings almost weekly throughout the Winter months.

HESTON CINE CLUB, Hon. Sec. : H. Edwards, 84, Greencroft Road, Heston, Middlesex.

On October 4th, two projection shows were given in aid of the Hounslow Hospital. On October 13th, Mr. G. S. Malthouse visited the Club. On October 20th, a demonstration of Kodachrome was given by Messrs. Kodak Ltd. Six Sunday showings of the Club's production, *Trial Run*, have been arranged. The addition of sound-on-disc to the Club's production is under consideration. Late in October, work will begin on an interior subject.

SCOTTISH CHURCHES FILM GUILD, Hon. Sec. : John G. Bridges, 100, Princes Street, Edinburgh.

Formed in May, 1936, The Scottish Churches Film Guild aims at developing the use of the film in the service of the Church. There is no intention of having Film Displays as part of religious services. It is intended to promote the use of films in the spreading of knowledge and understanding on such subjects as Public Health and Housing, Child Welfare and International Peace. For this purpose a film library is to be established, which can be drawn on by Churches all over the country, for use in connection with their various guilds and other activities.

Another feature of the guild's work is to advise and assist congregations and religious bodies in the selection of suitable apparatus and to facilitate, where necessary, the provision of such apparatus.

KENTON AMATEUR CINE SOCIETY, Hon. Sec. : Norman Dyer, 263, Kenton Road, Middlesex.

A programme of meetings and lectures have been arranged and production on the Society's first film has begun.

KINGSTON CINE CLUB, Hon. Sec. : 71, St. James' Avenue, Hampton Hill, Middlesex.

The Club caters for cinematographers in 8 mm., 9.5 mm., and 16 mm. film sizes and produces film plays, documentary and interest films. Meetings are held once a month during the Summer season and twice a month during the Winter season. Production outings are held every Sunday during the Summer months and as required during the Winter months. Negotiations are now in hand to take over a Studio which it is proposed to equip with efficient lighting equipment, props, etc.

KNIGHT FILM CLUB, Hon. Sec. : The Rev. Brian Hession, Chandos Cottage, Weston Turville, Bucks.

The objects of the Club are production of films on 16 mm. (both sound and silent) with special reference to life in the R.A.F., and to social and religious problems, and the showing of films in churches, hall, factories, Social Welfare Centres, schools, drawing rooms, and dinner parties. The Club circulates a number of silent and sound films among its members.

SALFORD CINE SOCIETY, Hon. Sec. : K. W. Kenyon, 9, Westfield, Salford, 6.

Two productions have been started this year, one on 9.5 m.m. and the other on 16 mm. *Bachelor's Holiday*, the Society's first 9.5 mm. film has been completed, and three new films will be shown at the Public Show in the early Spring. A "Beginners' Competition" has been run this year, and has proved a great success, and a start has been made on *In Town To-Night*, a film taken by individual members of crafts and almost extinct one-man industries.

SUDBURY FILM SOCIETY, Hon. Sec. : A. M. Tyrer, 9, Cranleigh Gardens, Kenton, Middlesex.

Affiliated to London Film Institute Society. Arranges regular performances of 16 mm. films at its own headquarters and assists local institutions and societies in choosing and presenting film programmes. Production plans include filming of Robert Owen's work for factory children.

A CATALOGUE of AMATEUR FILMS available on loan to amateur cine clubs and similar societies has been published by the Salford Cine Society. It contains particulars of over 200 films, fictional and non-fictional. Copies (price 2/-) may be obtained from the Hon. Sec., 9, Westfield, Salford, 6.

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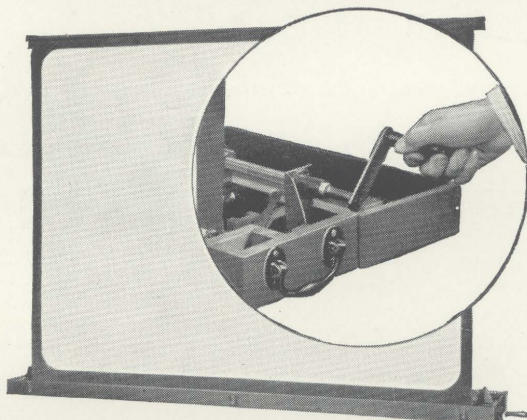
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